

# THE MIDDEN

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# The Midden

Publication of the Archaeological Society of British Columbia

**Editor:** Kathryn Bernick

**Subscriptions and Mailing:** Helmi Braches

Submissions and exchange publications should be directed to the Editor. Contributions on subjects germane to B.C. archaeology are welcomed: maximum length 1,500 words, no footnotes, and only a brief bibliography (if necessary at all). Guidelines available. Telephone inquiries: 873-5958.

**Subscription** is by membership in the A.S.B.C. (see below), or non-member rates of \$12.00 a year (5 issues). U.S.A. and overseas \$14.00 a year. Check or postal money order in Canadian funds payable to the A.S.B.C. Address to: *Midden* Subscriptions, P.O. Box 520, Station A, Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2N3.

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**Contributors this issue:** Kathryn Bernick, Morley Eldridge, Colin Gurnsey, Phyllis Mason, William Paull, Sandra Zacharias.

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**Production Assistants:** Vicki Feddema, Phyllis Mason, Barbara Stopa.

THE COVER: *Drawing on a hemlock tree near Kispiox, recorded as "arbograph site GkTc 3." See story on page 6.*



## The Society

The **Archaeological Society of British Columbia** is dedicated to the protection of archaeological resources and the spread of archaeological knowledge.

Meetings featuring illustrated lectures are held on the second Wednesday of each month (except July and August) at 8:00 p.m. in the Vancouver Museum Auditorium. Visitors and new members are welcome!

**President:**

William Paull (980-5186)

**Vice President:**

Roderick Millar (734-1897)

**Membership Secretary:**

Toni Crittenden (736-4708)

**Annual membership fees: single - \$20.00; family - \$25.00; senior citizen - \$15.00; student - \$15.00.**

**Membership includes** *Midden* subscription. Address to: A.S.B.C. Membership Secretary, P.O. Box 520, Station A, Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2N3.

**Affiliated Chapters:**

**Fraser Valley.** Meetings featuring illustrated lectures are held on the third Tuesday of each month (September to May) at 7:45 p.m. on the Fraser Valley College campus in Abbotsford. President: Thelma McIntyre (853-1495). Membership Secretary: Andy Purdy (823-4920).

**COMING TOPICS:**

March 13 Dr. R.G. Matson (UBC): Recent excavations at Crescent Beach.

April 10 Dr. Hector Williams (UBC): Excavations at Mytilene in 1990.

## Plans for Marpole site require an informed review

*THE OWNERS* of the Fraser Arms Hotel, which sits on top of the 2,000-year-old Marpole site (*DhRs 1*), have submitted a rezoning application to the city of Vancouver. They propose to build a high-rise hotel complex with a three-level underground garage. The city's planning department is currently reviewing the development plans from a land-use perspective and will forward its recommendations (for or against approval) to Council, likely for consideration at meeting in early March.

If Council agrees in principle, the application moves on to public hearings (usually in 5-6 weeks); if not, the developers may alter their plans to accommodate Council's concerns and try again.

The planners and the developers are all aware of the Marpole midden; impact to the archaeological resource has been an issue on previous occasions. The site, nevertheless, has been nibbled away over the years until all that remains of the Great Fraser Midden (as it was once called) are isolated deposits between buildings and under parking lots.

Various archaeologists have conducted salvage excavations on

segments of the Marpole site, but none was expected (or funded) to write up a comprehensive report or even to provide an accurate location-record of all pockets of intact cultural deposits. In other words, we don't know exactly how much remains, or where.

The Archaeology Branch has notified the parties concerned that an impact assessment (and attendant mitigation, if warranted) will be required.

Vancouver's planning department would like the assessment to be conducted now, at an early stage of the application process. They would then consider the significance of the archaeological resource, and any potential impacts, in their review. If the assessment indicated that significant alterations to the development will be required, they would not recommend approval.

The developers, who are required to conduct (that is, pay for) the archaeological assessment, want to do it after their application has final approval from the city.

The Archaeology Branch, like the planners, prefer an early assessment, but cannot insist that it be done now. They stipulate only that an appropriate assessment take place before construction begins.

It seems to me, that unless Vancouver City Council demands the impact assessment results before it decides whether to forward the application to public hearing, what remains of the Marpole midden may be doomed.

Surely, a developer who has obtained Council's approval in principle can assume that there will be no new major obstacles. If an impact assessment finds that significant archaeological deposits are endangered, the developer need only pay for enough 'mitigation' to appease the public (if there is an outcry). As for the law, consider that the maximum penalty for knowingly bulldozing the site is a \$2,000 fine. What's that compared to the expectations from a high-rise hotel?

The ASBC is currently composing a petition to Vancouver Mayor and Council emphasizing that the results of an impact assessment should be in hand before deciding on the merits of the proposed development. The weakness of provincial heritage legislation should not prevent the City of Vancouver from ensuring that its archaeological heritage receives maximum protection. □

— *Kathryn Bernick*

# Permits

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## Permits issued by the B.C. Archaeology Branch September through December 1990:

- 1990-107 Sandra Zacharias: impact assessment, B.C. Hydro Barnes Creek diversion project.
- 1990-108 Diana French: impact assessment, Port Albion, Clayoquot District.
- 1990-109 Wayne Choquette: impact assessment, building relocation, Fort Steele Historical Town.
- 1990-110 Bjorn Simonsen: impact assessment, *Dksf 4*, Comox District.
- 1990-111 Ian Wilson: impact assessment, Westcoast Energy pipeline project, Sukunka Valley, northeastern B.C.
- 1990-112 Richard Brolly: impact assessment, golf course development, Harrison Hot Springs.
- 1990-113 Mike Rousseau: impact assessment, NW Energy Corp. proposed developments, Williams Lake.
- 1990-114 Mike Rousseau: impact assessment, B.C. Rail project, Williams Lake.
- 1990-115 Mike Rousseau: survey and monitoring, *FaRm 9* and *FaRn 36*, Williams Lake.
- 1990-116 Ian Wilson: impact assessment, Stoddart pipeline, NW of Ft. St. John.
- 1990-117 Ian Wilson: impact assessment, Suhm Gas pipeline, near Petitot River, northeastern B.C.
- 1990-118 Ian Wilson: impact assessment, Adsett Gas pipeline, near Fort Nelson.
- 1990-119 Ian Wilson: impact assessment, pipeline project near Umbach Creek, northeastern B.C.
- 1990-120 Mike Rousseau: excavation, *FaRm 23*, Williams Lake.
- 1990-121 Sylvia Albright: impact assessment, K'shian Construction log dump near Kitsault, Alice Arm.
- 1990-122 Morris Sutherland: survey, Uchucklesit Inlet, Barkley Sound.
- 1990-123 Diana French: impact assessment, *EaSf 2*, Sayward District.
- 1990-124 Arne Carlson: inventory and impact assessment, Scuzzy Creek Hydro Project, Boston Bar.
- 1990-125 Wayne Choquette: impact assessment, Fording Coal pit mine, East Kootenay Region.
- 1990-126 Mike Rousseau: evaluation and mitigation, *EfQt 1*, Fraser Bay subdivision.
- 1990-127 Sandra Zacharias: monitoring and emergency management, *DgRr 1*, Crescent Beach.
- 1990-128 Bjorn Simonsen: impact assessment, *EaSh 10*, Sayward District.
- 1990-129 John Dewhirst: data recovery, C. Robertson property, Comox.
- 1990-130 Richard Brolly: impact assessment, *FcRi 8*, Little Horsefly River, Cariboo District.
- 1990-131 Sandra Zacharias: impact assessment, near Buffalo Creek, 100 Mile House.
- 1990-132 Wayne Choquette: impact assessment, proposed treatment facility, Radium Hot Springs.
- 1990-133 Leonard Ham: overview and survey, Furry Creek, Howe Sound.
- 1990-134 Wayne Choquette: impact assessment, *DiQv 38*, Okanagan Falls.
- 1990-135 Bjorn Simonsen: data recovery, *DkSf4*, Comox District.
- 1990-136 Colin Poole: inventory, near Windermere, Kootenay District.
- 1990-137 Morley Eldridge: inventory, lower Tsitika valley.
- 1990-138 Sandra Zacharias: impact assessment, proposed expansion of Okanagan College campus.
- 1990-139 Ian Wilson: inventory and assessment, historic logging sites west of Ladysmith.
- 1990-140 Ian Wilson: data recovery, *EdQx 41* and *42*, and impact assessment, *EdQx 43*, near Monte Creek.
- 1990-141 Richard Brolly: impact assessment, Triple E Trailer Park, Westbank.
- 1990-142 Bjorn Simonsen, survey, Gabriola Island.

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## IN MEMORIAM

We are sad to report that Sheila Winifred Neville died on December 1, 1990 following a lengthy illness. She was a founding member of the Archaeological Society of British Columbia and played a major role in its development. Sheila served for about 16 years on the executive committee and was the fourth president of the Society. She will be remembered with pride and affection by her many friends as one who worked long and hard for the furtherance of archaeology in British Columbia.

*William A. Paull, President  
Archaeological Society of British Columbia*

### New sites may be very old

*INLAND MIDDENS*, that is, coastal sites situated several kilometres from the modern-day shoreline, are popping up in the path of the Vancouver Island gas pipeline.

Ian Wilson, who is conducting the impact assessment along the pipeline route, recently discovered two inland middens on the Cowichan Indian Reserve. Last year, he reported some on the Sechelt Peninsula.

Pipeline construction will impact both Cowichan sites. Preliminary testing indicates 40-cm-deep cultural deposits at one (*DeRw 16*) and 90-cm-deep deposits at the other (*DeRw 17*). Neither has shell, and artifacts recovered to date are all from stone. *DeRw 16*, on the south side of the Cowichan River,

yielded mainly pebble tools, which suggests a specialized activity area or a very old site. None of the artifacts is diagnostic. An overlying burnt layer (probably from a forest fire) that also appears in other areas of the Cowichan Reserve where it has been radiocarbon dated to 1750  $\pm$  50 BP, provides an upper age limit for the new finds.

At press time, Wilson is consulting with the Cowichan Band and the Archaeology Branch regarding the nature of salvage excavations that will be required.

□

### Trust Reports

*THE BC HERITAGE* Trust's latest annual report shows that archaeology projects account for about 9% of all funding commitments made by the Trust

during the fiscal year ending March 31, 1990.

A total of \$208,425 was awarded to 11 archaeology projects (7 in the Archaeology Program, 3 in Planning and Inventory, and 1 Special Project).

The Heritage Society of BC tops the list of provincial organizations receiving support from the Trust, with \$70,000 in 1989-90. The Underwater Archaeological Society of BC was awarded \$32,600, the BC Museums Association \$10,260, the BC Historical Federation \$4,000, and the Archaeological Society of BC \$2,500.

The BC Heritage Trust is a provincial Crown corporation overseen by a Cabinet-appointed board of directors with management services and technical advice provided by Heritage Conservation Branch staff. Most funding comes from BC Lottery revenues. □

## ***Hydro pulls plug***

The Site C dam project has been shelved indefinitely, and all archaeological and other environmental studies now underway are being wrapped up. According to current forecasts, the hydroelectric power that Site C would generate will not be needed until the year 2010. This reflects a provincial shift away from centralized utilities in favour of independent power producers.

## ***Dig finds turtles***

Salvage excavations necessitated by Highway construction near Monte Creek, east of Kamloops, yielded enormous quantities of lithic debitage as well as stone and bone artifacts. Brad Smart, who is analyzing the material recently recovered by I.R. Wilson Consultants from *EdQx 41* and *42* estimates the total assemblage at 30,000 pieces. Preliminary faunal identifications indicate a large amount of turtle remains.

## ***Photo archive snaps shut***

The Anthropology Collections section of the Royal BC Museum has suspended public access to its ethnohistoric photograph collection (and other audio-visual materials) while staff prepare an inventory and pack the collections in preparation for relocation necessitated by an asbestos-removal project. The photo collection will be closed at least until mid-summer 1991. Inquiries should be directed to Dan Savard, RBCM.

## ***Archaeologists value trees***

Although the Archaeology Branch does not accord culturally modified trees (CMTs) full status as heritage resources, other sectors of the community do. Arcas Ltd. is currently recording CMTs on the west coast of Vancouver Island, in the Gold River area. The project is sponsored by the Mowachat Band in cooperation with local logging companies.

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## **Heritage Trust grants**

*RECENT AWARDS* by the B.C. Heritage Trust include \$2,500 to the Archaeological Society of British Columbia to help defray this year's costs of publishing *The Midden*.

The Dept. of Biochemistry at Simon Fraser University was awarded \$45,000 to set up an "Obsidian Artifacts Library." Obsidian sources will be determined by matching archaeological artifacts with samples in the Geological Survey of Canada's field collection.

Also, two upcoming field projects received funding. The Spahomin Archaeological Inventory initiates the Upper Nicola Band's program to manage archaeological resources in its traditional territory. Malcolm James will direct the survey work, as well as some site assessment, burial salvage, and private collections recording.

The second field program to be sponsored by the B.C. Heritage Trust will take place near Toquaht Bay, just east of Ucluelet on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The Toquaht Archaeological Project research is directed by Alan McMillan and Denis St. Claire. □

SFU archaeologists have found a way out of paying GST on field school expenses - by excavating across the border at early lithic sites in Wyoming. The field portion of the 1991 summer course will be taught by **Bill Prentiss**, after several weeks of on-campus lectures by **Phil Hobler** . . . UBC's 1991 summer field school, which will be taught by **Dr. David Pokotylo**, hasn't quite been finalized, but plans are shaping up for a dig in the Fraser valley . . . Not to be outdone, Lower Mainland colleges are trying to arrange a joint project in conjunction with the Canadian Parks Service at the **Gulf of Georgia Cannery**, a National Historic Site in Steveston . . . **James Scott Hamilton** recently defended his PhD thesis *Fur Trade*

*Social Inequality and the Role of Non-Verbal Communication* (Dept. of Archaeology, SFU) . . . The B.C. **Archaeology Branch** has officially divested itself of the follower "and Outdoor Recreation," both in name and in mandate. No one at their office knew who (if anyone) has been assigned the outdoor recreation concerns . . . The **B.C. Museums Association** has decided to publish its newsletter *Museum Roundup* every other month instead of monthly in order to cope with funding cuts. The B.C. Heritage Trust turned down their application for a publication assistance grant this year . . . The long-awaited federal **Archaeological Heritage Protection Act** is getting closer - the

bill was introduced in the last session of parliament in 1990; however, there wasn't enough time to do anything, so it'll have to be introduced all over again . . . Archaeologists at the University of Calgary have chosen what is turning out to be an *extremely* timely topic for the November 1991 **Chacmool** conference - *Culture and Environment: A Fragile Co-existence* . . . No one can fault **Exxon** for doing things in small doses. The recently issued 300-page typeset report of their archaeological work in Alaska, titled *The 1989 Exxon Valdez Cultural Resource Program*, is co-authored by 10 people, plus two appendix authors, all on the title page — a sure way to discourage citation in bibliographies.

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## Exhibits

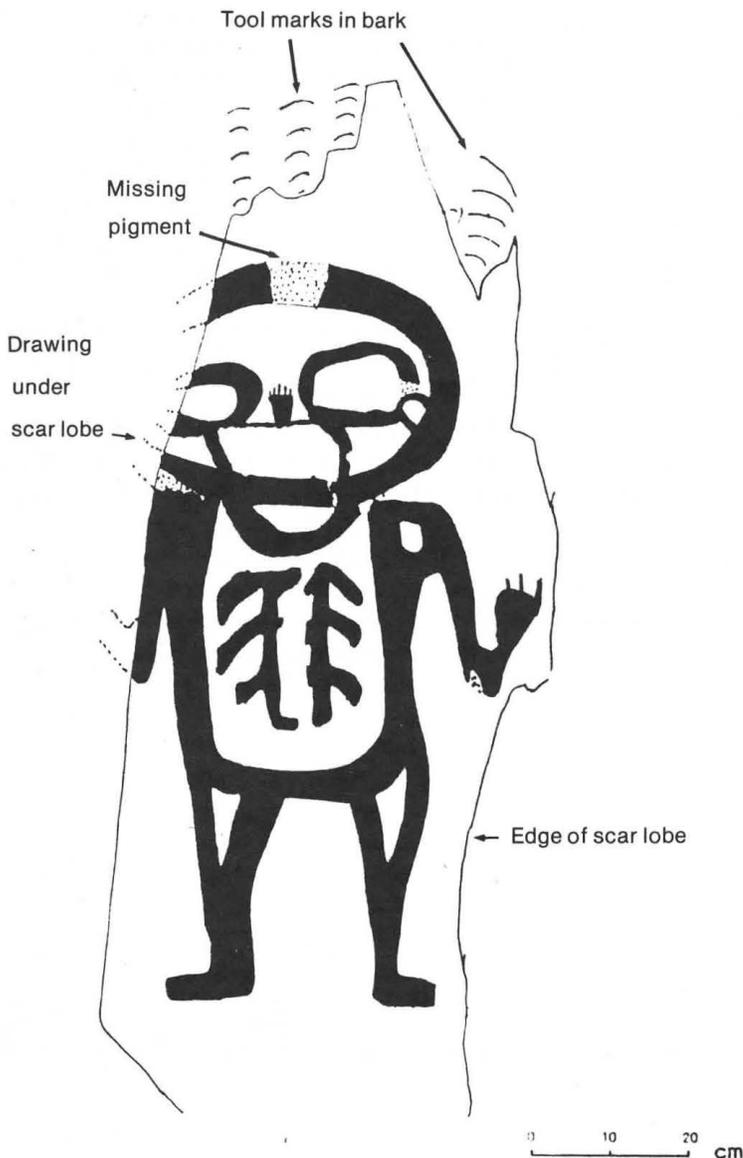
### **Royal B.C. Museum, Victoria**

*BLOOD FROM STONE: Making and Using Stone Tools in Prehistoric British Columbia.* February 14 to April 14, 1991.

### **Vancouver Maritime Museum**

*ENLIGHTENED VOYAGES: Treasures from the Northwest Coast 1774-1792.* North American premiere showing of charts, drawings, and artifacts being returned to Canada from Spain after 200 years. January 22 through April 21, 1991.

# Kispiox Pict



Charcoal drawing on hemlock tree (GkTc 3).

*DURING* the winter of 1988-1989, foresters made a startling discovery near the headwaters of the Kispiox River in central British Columbia. An anthropomorphic pictograph looked back at them from the scarred surface of an ancient hemlock tree. The foresters were conducting an inventory cruise of a proposed logging area and reported the site to the Ministry of Forests, which in turn contacted the Archaeology Branch. The Branch advised them to hire an archaeological consultant, and so, Millennia Research was retained to conduct an impact assessment of the proposed logging area.

I surveyed the area in the spring of 1989 (permit 1989-32). The site is located between the Nangeese and Sweetin rivers, about 5 km north of the confluence of the Nangeese and Kispiox rivers. High and rolling, the area appeared to have little potential for archaeological sites. Except for a disused trail along the Sweetin River, no signs of recent or ancient human use were evident.

The tree painting, or "arbor-graph," was located on a 1-m-diameter dead hemlock tree that leaned heavily to one side. The base

# Petroglyph Tree

by Morley Eldridge

of the tree was hollow, with only a thin shell of wood remaining behind the bark. The tree had been blazed on four sides, but three of the scars were completely overgrown. Tool marks in the bark indicated that, probably, a metal axe or adze had been used to remove the bark. The fourth side had a 70-cm-long open scar-face near the base of the tree with a 46-cm-long painting, in black, on the exposed wood. The pigment may be charcoal mixed with grease, although this has not been confirmed by laboratory tests. The line-widths vary between 1 mm and 3 cm, suggesting that both a fine stylus and a wide brush, or fingers, were used to apply the paint.

The figure is anthropomorphic, or human-like. The head is ovoid, with sub-rectangular open eyes. The nose is small and triangular, and notable for five short stylus-drawn lines that probably represent bear claws. Curved lines that extend downwards from the eyes may delimit the mouth or represent tears.

The body is portrayed with a sub-rectangular line. A curved

mouth (or clavicles?) extends down from the head into the body area. Two vertical lines with slanting lateral extensions probably represent vertebrae and ribs. Only the left arm is now clear, the right having been grown over by the tree. The exposed arm is in a flexed, upraised position. The hand is a thickening of the forearm, with only three digits now recognizable. The shoulder is formed by two lines that merge at the upper arm leaving a small negative space. The legs are extended in a "natural" standing position. The thighs, similar to the upper arms, are formed by lines that merge at the knees.

Doris Lundy, an expert in rock art, advised that the style is consistent with Late Classic northern Northwest Coast rock art forms. Common attributes include: a rectangular body, round head, and ovoid eyes; upturned arms; a suggestion of form-lines (the open shoulder and extra circle near the eye); and a head-to-body ratio of 1:3. I noted some elements of the tree painting that can be seen in petroglyphs from the region. For example, the line connecting the eyes can also be seen at the

Gardner Canal petroglyph, and the vertebrae-rib treatment is present at the Chindemash Creek site on the Skeena River near Kitselas.

I recommended that logging proceed, since the leaning snag was likely to fall in the near future. I suggested that loggers could help (a welcome change!) by providing the heavy equipment to carefully fell the fragile tree and transport the painted part to a regional museum or Native cultural centre. The feature could then be dated and conserved.

Later that year, the arborgraph-tree was cut down and the painted section removed to Chief Walter Harris' carving shed in Kispiox. Chief Harris (*simogyet geel*) is the ranking hereditary chief of the Kispiox Fireweed Clan. For many years, he had a trapline registered along the Nangeese River, in the study area.

I returned to the site in the fall to collect dendrochronological (tree ring dating) samples. After locating the tree stump under 20 cm of snow, we cut away sections of the stump. We cut additional samples from nearby old-growth hemlocks. The following day, I visited Chief

Harris at Kispiox. He graciously cut a sample from the end of the tree that appeared to have some pre-scar wood (necessary to identify the year of injury). The painted face and its associated scar lobes were left unmarred.

I had planned to try both direct ring counting and crossdating. A direct count of the annual rings formed after the tree was scarred would give the number of years between the painting and the tree's death (there were indications that the painting was contemporaneous with the scar). Crossdating would compare the patterns in the rings of the dead tree with those of living trees in the vicinity to establish the year of the tree's death. The combination of the two dating methods would, I hoped, provide a calendar date for the painting.

The samples were submitted to Forintek Canada Corp. for dating by dendrochronologist Les Jozsa. There were a number of problems with the samples, in particular, the absence of any ring series changes that clearly correlated with the injury to the tree from bark-stripping. There was one bright spot — although the ring characteristics of these hemlocks prevented crossdating, it was possible to estimate from the degree of deterioration that the tree died 10 to 20 years ago. During a later trip, Les Jozsa and I determined the year of injury on a previously overlooked sample. We identified a traumatic event that had interrupted the normal growth-ring pattern; it was followed, for several years, by microscopic-size rings. At last, the

scar and its associated painting could be dated — the arborgraph was made between 1826 and 1836.

Little first-hand information about art on trees or rocks has been written by ethnographers of the Northwest Coast. James Teit recorded that, among Interior Salish groups, anthropomorphic tree carvings or paintings were made by people passing through a region for the first time, during vision quests, and near graves. No references to tree painting or carving are known for the Gitksan, in whose territory the painted hemlock lies, but I believe that, most likely, the tree marked ownership of a grease trail. The Cranberry Trail from the Nass River crosses the Kispiox River only a few kilometres away, and smaller trails to upstream Skeena River settlements may have branched off and passed right by the pictograph tree. The painting dates to turbulent times when powerful chiefs vied with each other for control of the lucrative trade routes bringing eulachon grease and Euro-American manufactured goods to the Interior. However, neither Chief Harris nor his son Rodney recognized the painted image as a crest figure, so whether the arborgraph was related to the control of grease trails and overland trade remains speculative. □

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*Morley Eldridge is a Victoria-based archaeological consultant (Millennia Research) with extensive experience researching Native forest use and culturally modified trees.*

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## *Coherent and thoughtful*

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**Prehistoric Life on the Olympic Peninsula: The First Inhabitants of a Great American Wilderness**, by Eric O. Bergland and Jerry Marr. 1988. Pacific Northwest National Parks and Forests Association (83 South King St., Suite 212, Seattle, Wash. 98104). 88 pp., ill., glossary, index. US\$ 6.95.

**Prehistoric Life on the Olympic Peninsula** is a short, information-packed, book aimed at the general public. It begins with a chapter on the local environment and park history. Following this are four chapters describing the prehistory of this region of Washington State beginning 12,000 years ago. The final two chapters introduce the historic period, define the science of archaeology, and discuss cultural resource management in Olympic National Park.

At the core of this book are the four chapters on local prehistory. Each begins with an imaginative reconstruction of a scene from prehistoric life, based on archaeological evidence found on the Olympic Peninsula.

The reconstructions are thoughtful and rich in detail. Two Early Prehistoric (12,000 - 6000 B.P.) men and a boy kill and butcher a mastodon. Three Middle Prehistoric (6000 - 3000 B.P.) men hunt elk in the uplands with their atlatls, then butcher the carcasses before returning home to their families. Women finally make an appearance in the archaeological record in the Late Prehistoric -

Early Maritime Period (3000 - 1000 B.P.), when they spend their day cutting up halibut and salmon for drying at Hoko River. During the late Prehistoric - Northwest Coast Pattern Period (1000 - 200 B.P.), men at Ozette hold a meeting to plan their next whale hunt. These imaginative scenes are followed by detailed discussion of the archaeological evidence, and an overview of each prehistoric period.

Although this book is written for the general public, some of the archaeological jargon and technical terms may deter the casual reader. The glossary is helpful, but terms like "lithic isolate" and "retouch" can be intimidating. Sentences such as, "Their tool kit indicates that these people were adherents to a cultural/technological pattern of remarkable stability and generalized application" (p. 29), suggest that this book is not intended for school-age audiences.

The main shortcoming of this book is that the authors try to pack too much information into its 88 pages. Taken as a whole, though, **Prehistoric Life on the Olympic Peninsula** presents a coherent and thoughtful picture of what is currently known about the archaeology of this region. I recommend it to those with an informed interest or some background in archaeology, as a useful archaeological guide to the park and as a reference book. □

— Sandra Zacharias

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*ASBC member Sandra Zacharias is a consulting archaeologist and part-time writer.*

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## *Rich in detail*

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**Kitwanga Fort Report**, by George F. MacDonald. 1989. Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, Quebec. (Mercury Series, Directorate Paper No. 4). 130 pp., ill., bibl. \$19.95 (paper).

*I FIRST SAW* the hill some 24 years ago, when I was gaining an interest in Native prehistory. Unfortunately, little information was then available to describe the Battle Hill at Kitwanga. Viola Garfield, writing in 1950, provided a brief description of some of the features of a fortress or "Ta'awdzep" described to her by Tsimshian informants. Some mention of such forts was also made by Marius Barbeau in a number of his works for the National Museum of Canada. But the Kitwanga site was only mentioned peripherally.

George Macdonald's report on the historical research and analysis of the structural remains at the Kitwanga "Ta'awdzep" is long overdue. It provides an explanation of the origins of the site, its uses, the prevalent oral traditions relating to the site, and a broad perspective of the social conditions considered to have been experienced during the time of the site's occupation.

**Kitwanga Fort Report** is organized into two parts. Part I is the social context with sections on ethnohistory, trade, the historical period, and Skeena River exploration. Part II will be of interest to the archaeologist, as it deals with the physical setting at the Ta'awdzep site. This part

includes sections on geology, a botanical survey of the site, excavations, test trenches, cultural stratigraphy, and a discussion of reconstructing a model of the fortress. These are followed by seven appendices that provide details on specific technical research that resulted from the excavations.

The report is well-illustrated with excellent photographs and drawings liberally inserted throughout the text. It provides a vast amount of detail about the fortress and the conditions that resulted in its use and decline. The report suffers in that the subjects of the appendices are not indicated in the table of contents. As well, one is left with the impression that in haste to publish, unnecessary information is included to fill out the text. But these are minor faults given the scarcity of information available about this area of British Columbia and its people. **Kitwanga Fort Report** has a richness of material that should provide the reader with a broad insight into Gitksan culture and the efforts undertaken to match oral traditions with archaeological fact.

You've heard about the court case—here's the chance to get the real dirt . . . □

— *Colin W. Gurnsey*

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*ASBC member Colin Gurnsey is an avocational archaeologist who works for BC Hydro managing environmental and heritage resources. He's a former resident of Kitwanga.*

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## **Dual format creates problems**

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**Ancient Canada**, by Robert McGhee. 1989. Canadian Museum of Civilization [Hull, Quebec]. 175 pp., ill., index. \$29.95 (hardcover).

*AT LAST!* A glossy book about Canadian archaeology, for the general public.

**Ancient Canada** by Robert McGhee, head of the Scientific Section of the Archaeological Survey of Canada, presents two textually separate themes. The primary story consists of 16 chapters arranged in chronological order from the last ice age to recent times. Each describes a particular prehistoric culture based on evidence from archaeological excavation. These chapters skip back and forth across the country so that many regions and many types of societies are covered. The last chapter summarizes "tabloid prehistory" with reasons for dismissing everything from Barry Fell's theories to mythical Vikings.

Interspersed among the descriptions of the burial-mound builders of Labrador, Plains buffalo hunters, Arctic whalers, etc., the reader encounters the second theme, a series of topics such as dogs of the New World, Paleo-Eskimo art, and the history of Canadian archaeology. These self-contained pieces appear in contextually logical places, but they

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# Heritage Week — February 18-24, 1991

interrupt the primary text (sometimes in mid-sentence).

McGhee writes well and gives his subject personal relevance with anecdotes and analogies to current, modern situations. He's partly successful at avoiding gender-biased language, but persists in assuming that hunting was an exclusively male activity. Except for Huron farmers, women are relegated to the domestic sphere.

The geographical mix avoids repetition and succeeds in depicting Canadian prehistory as rich and varied. McGhee emphasizes his own research and that of his colleagues at the Canadian Museum of Civilization. The sections on British Columbia deal with west coast plank houses, totem poles, and the Kitwanga fort. The Interior Plateau is conspicuously absent.

The dual format of **Ancient Canada** creates real problems for the reader. Perhaps, if the topical insets were visually distinct (a different font or a shaded

background) and did not occupy full pages in the middle of a chapter, one could accommodate the disruptions. A bibliography and an index of subjects (in addition to proper names) would have made the book more useful and more accessible.

Otherwise, the production is impressive — beautifully reproduced drawings and photos, many in colour, clear, readable typefaces, excellent editing and proofreading. **Ancient Canada** is an attractive, interesting, informative book about Canadian archaeology. If the designer had taken the reader into consideration, it may have been a winner. □

— *Kathryn Bernick*

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*ASBC Member and Midden Editor  
Kathryn Bernick is a freelance  
archaeologist and writer based in  
Vancouver.*

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## A.I.A. Lecture

Professor J. Wilson Myers of Boston University will give a public talk titled *Balloon Archaeology: Three Ancient Capital Cities from the Air*, at the April 8, 1991, meeting of the Vancouver chapter of the Archaeological Institute of America. The lecture will take place in the Lecture Theatre of the UBC Museum of Anthropology, at 8:00 pm.

# Annual Index to *The Midden*, Journal of the Archaeological Society of British Columbia

Volume 22, 1990 (published February, April, June, October, December)

(★ indicates illustrated article)

Compiled by Phyllis Mason

## Author

- Apland, Brian. *The Archaeology Branch*. 22:5:3-4 D'90.
- Bernick, Kathryn. *Editorial: A Promising Proposal*. 22:1:1 F'90.
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