

Shediac Island Archaeology, 1999
Final Report

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ARCHAEOCONSULTING
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Prehistoric shell midden eroding onto the beach on Shediac Island before excavation in 1999

Background

Salvage excavation of the eroding shell midden site, CbDd-2, on the southwestern shore of Shediac Island (figure 1) continued for four weeks in July and August of 1999. The data recovered augment our understanding of the changes in human adaptation to Shediac Bay over the past 1500 years.

The structure of the site and the excavation methods were described in the preliminary report (Leonard 2000). The final report focuses on the artifacts recovered from the approximately 6 m² dug in 1999. These are listed in table 1. This year's information complements that derived from excavations in 1990 (24 m²) and 1998 (5 m²) (see figure 1).

The following interpretation of the artifacts is arranged in chronological order, beginning with the prehistoric period and concluding with the historic period, that is, after 1534, when written description of the region began with the first voyage of Jacques Cartier.

Prehistoric occupation

Pottery

The oldest artifact is a small fragment of the rim of a pottery vessel. Although only the size of a nickel, this sherd bears clear dentate stamp decoration on the interior (below right) and deep incisions in the lip (below left). Both attributes associate the artifact with the latter stages of the Middle Woodland period.

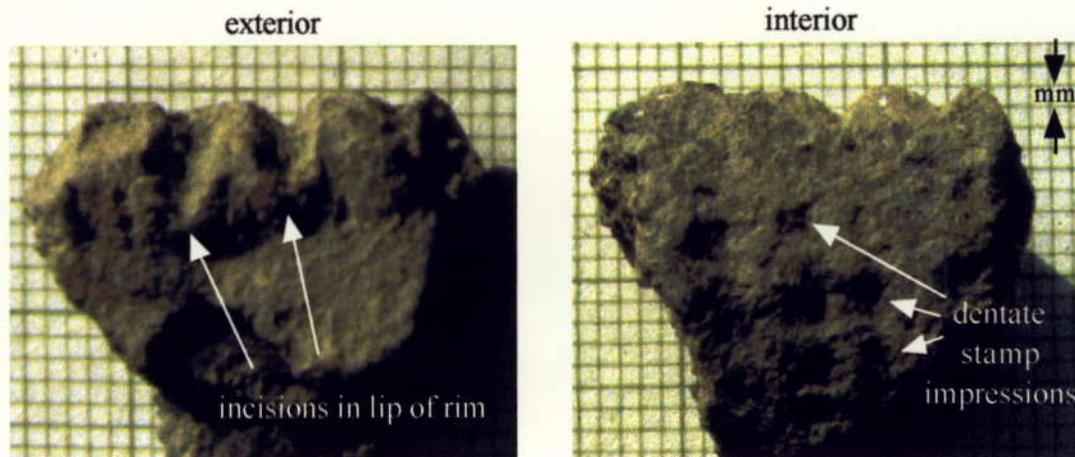


Figure 2. Middle Woodland pottery rim sherd (CbDd-2:476).

In the Maine-Maritimes ceramic sequence, this manner of decorating pottery lasts from about 1600 years ago to 1300 years ago (Petersen and Sanger 1991:130). The sherd in figure 2 was found in excavation unit 34 (figure 1), at the interface between shell matrix and the gravelly layer beneath it.

Similar Middle Woodland pottery has been found in each of the areas excavated in previous years. Although sometime found in the shell matrix, mostly it is found in shell-free context. Late Woodland pottery is more common in the shell midden deposits.

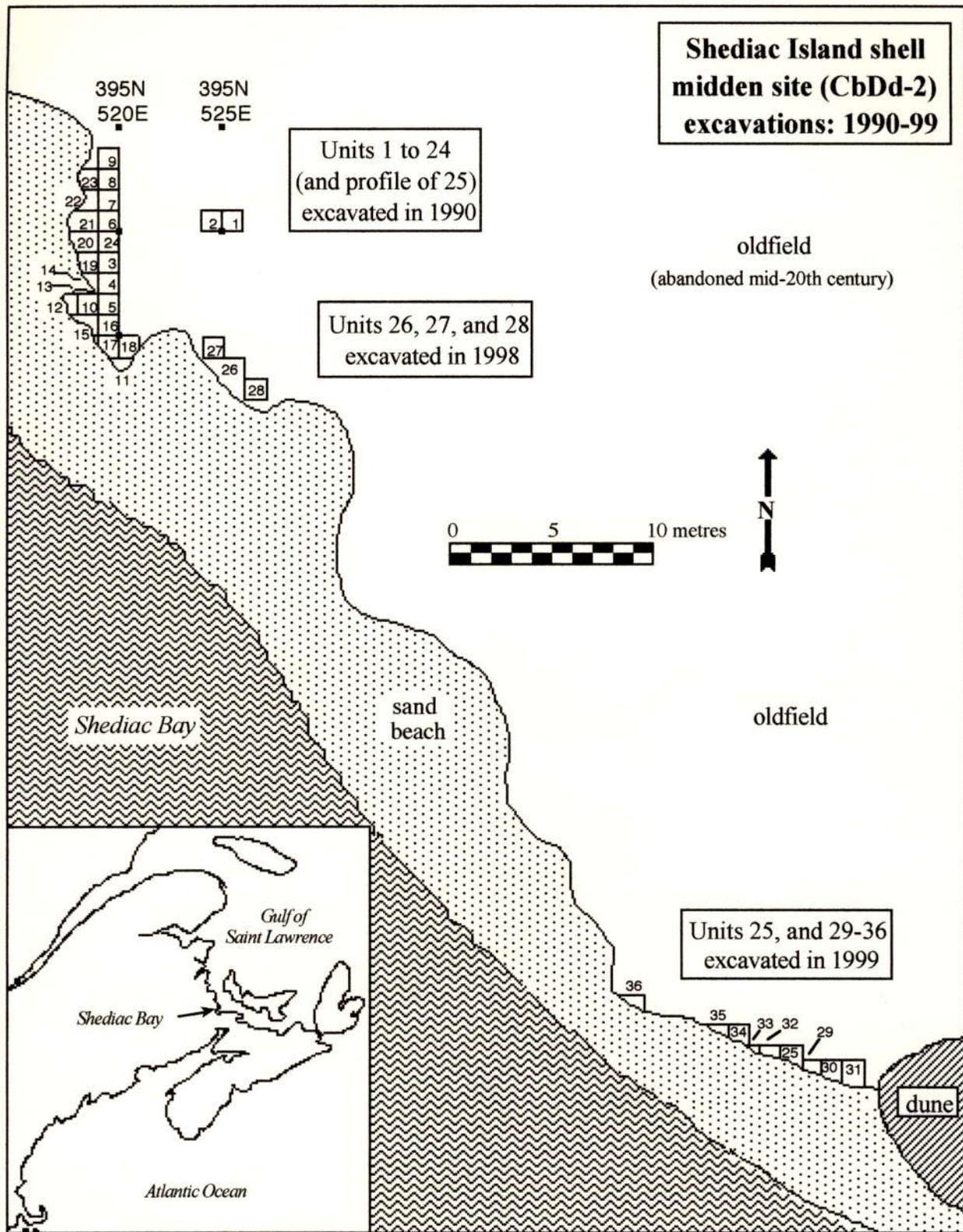


Figure 1. Location of excavation units from three field seasons at CbDd-2.

Table 1. Artifacts from CbDd-2, 1999

<i>Catalog No.</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Portion</i>	<i>Notes</i>
CbDd-2:384	25	2	coal	lump	
CbDd-2:385	25	2	glass	seed bead	white, 3 mm dia
CbDd-2:386	25	2	glass	seed bead	white, 3 mm dia
CbDd-2:387	25	2	brass	pin	
CbDd-2:388	25	2	lead	shot	no. 6
CbDd-2:389	25	2	lead	scrap	
CbDd-2:390	25	3	quartz	flakes	wht, n=5
CbDd-2:391	25	3	argillite	flakes	dk gry, n=2
CbDd-2:392	25	3	jasper	nodule	mustard
CbDd-2:393	25	3	ceramic	sherdlets	1 dentate stamp, n=4
CbDd-2:394	25	3	bone	fish	n=7
CbDd-2:395	25	3	bone	bird	n=19
CbDd-2:396	25	3	bone	mammal	n=52
CbDd-2:397	25	3	tooth	rodent	molar
CbDd-2:398	25	3	nut shell	hazelnut	charred
CbDd-2:399	25	3	botanical	charred	n=8
CbDd-2:400	25	3	tooth	muskrat	incisor
CbDd-2:401	25	3	shell	Mya	chondrophore
CbDd-2:402	29	2	iron	scrap	
CbDd-2:403	29	2	container glass	clear	
CbDd-2:404	29	2	container glass	amber	
CbDd-2:405	29	2	brass rfl ctrdrg	.22 cal	long, n=2
CbDd-2:406	29	2	coal	lumps	n=12
CbDd-2:407	29	3	glass	seed bead	black
CbDd-2:408	29	3	rhyolite	flake	utilized
CbDd-2:409	29	3	ferrgns arglite	flake	wear facets
CbDd-2:410	29	3	quartz	flakes	white, n=3
CbDd-2:411	29	3	ceramic	sherdlets	dentate stamped, n=2
CbDd-2:412	29	3	bone	fish	n=1
CbDd-2:413	29	3	bone	bird	n=4
CbDd-2:414	29	3	bone	mammal	n=9
CbDd-2:415	29	3	nut shell	hazelnut	
CbDd-2:416	30	2	coal	lumps	n=3
CbDd-2:417	30	2	container glass	bottle	1956 Pepsi
CbDd-2:418	30	2	brass	flashing	with round nail holes
CbDd-2:419	30	2	tar	lumps	caulking?
CbDd-2:420	30	2	argillite	flake	
CbDd-2:421	30	2	bone	bird	medullary bone, n=7
CbDd-2:422	30	3	bone	mammal	n=11

Table 1. Artifacts from CbDd-2, 1999 (continued)

<i>Catalog No.</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Portion</i>	<i>Notes</i>
CbDd-2:423	30	3	glass	bead	white
CbDd-2:424	30	3	glass	bead	burned
CbDd-2:425	31	2	hematite	nodule	wear facets
CbDd-2:426	30	3	quartzite	biface	contracting stem, 40 mm long
CbDd-2:427	30	3	quartz	flakes	n=3
CbDd-2:428	30	3	ballast	flint	unworked, n=2
CbDd-2:429	30	3	ballast	flint	worked
CbDd-2:430	30	3	poss ballast	flint	worked
CbDd-2:431	30	3	chalcedony	flake	
CbDd-2:432	30	3	chalcedony	flake	
CbDd-2:433	30	3	chalcedony	nodule	
CbDd-2:434	30	3	jasper	flake	
CbDd-2:435	30	3	ceramic	sherd	poss cws
CbDd-2:436	30	3	bone	fish	n=11
CbDd-2:437	30	3	bone	bird	n=13
CbDd-2:438	30	3	bone	mammal	n=26
CbDd-2:439	30	3	bone	radius	dog size
CbDd-2:440	30	3	bone	metatarsal	dog size
CbDd-2:441	30	3	bone	vert process	dog size
CbDd-2:442	30	3	botanical	berry	blueberry?, charred
CbDd-2:443	30	3	botanical	unknown	
CbDd-2:444	30	3	botanical	cornus	
CbDd-2:445	30	3	botanical	cornus	
CbDd-2:446	31	3	ballast flint	flake	
CbDd-2:447	31	3	argillite	flake	
CbDd-2:448	31	3	jasper	biface frag	
CbDd-2:449	31	3	argillite	flake	
CbDd-2:450	31	3	bone	fish	n=2
CbDd-2:451	31	3	bone	bird	n=6
CbDd-2:452	31	3	bone	mammal	groove cut long axis
CbDd-2:453	31	3	bone	mammal	n=18
CbDd-2:454	31	3	bone	mammal	bear phalange?
CbDd-2:455	31	3	tooth	mammal	incisor
CbDd-2:456	31	3	tooth	mammal	incisor
CbDd-2:457	31	3	tooth	mammal	molar, dog?
CbDd-2:458	31	3	tooth	mammal	beaver molar
CbDd-2:459	31	3	nutshell	hazelnut	
CbDd-2:460	32	2	ballast flint	flake	
CbDd-2:461	32	2	ballast flint	flake	

Table 1. Artifacts from CbDd-2, 1999 (continued)

<i>Catalog No.</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Portion</i>	<i>Notes</i>
CbDd-2:462	32	3	mustard jasper	scraper	distal fragment
CbDd-2:463	32	3	jaspagate	flake	Washademoak?
CbDd-2:464	32	3	rhyolite	flakes	n=2
CbDd-2:465	32	3	lithic	pebble	polished, possible rattle bead
CbDd-2:466	32	3	ceramic	sherd	possible cws dec
CbDd-2:467	32	3	bone	fish	n=4
CbDd-2:468	32	3	bone	mammal	n=8
CbDd-2:469	32	3	bone	auditory bullae	
CbDd-2:470	32	3	botanical	cornus	n=3
CbDd-2:471	32	3	botanical	cornus	n=2
CbDd-2:472	32	3	glass	seed bead	white
CbDd-2:473	33	3	lead	shot	
CbDd-2:474	33	3	glass	seed bead	white
CbDd-2:475	33	3	glass	seed bead	green
CbDd-2:476	33	3	argillite	flake	
CbDd-2:477	33	3	quartz	flakes	n=2
CbDd-2:478	33	3	hematite	nodule	
CbDd-2:479	33	3	bone	fish	n=10
CbDd-2:480	33	3	bone	bird	n=4
CbDd-2:481	33	3	bone	mammal	n=24
CbDd-2:482	33	3	bone	mammal	
CbDd-2:483	33	3	tooth	mammal	probably muskrat
CbDd-2:484	33	3	ceramic	sherdlets	buff, Lt WdInd pottery, n=3
CbDd-2:485	33	3	botanical	seed	hawthorn?
CbDd-2:486	34	3	rhyolite	flake	red
CbDd-2:487	34	2	quartz	wedge	white, pièce esquillé?
CbDd-2:488	34	2	ceramic	rim	sherd, dentate stamp
CbDd-2:489	34	3	bone	fish	n=2
CbDd-2:490	34	2	bone	bird	n=3
CbDd-2:491	34	2	bone	mammal	n=10
CbDd-2:492	35	2	coal	lump	n=2
CbDd-2:493	35	2	iron	scrap	n=14
CbDd-2:494	35	2	brass rfl ctrdg	.22 cal	long, n=2
CbDd-2:495	35	2	ceramic	sherd	fwe, blue trnsfr prnt
CbDd-2:496	35	2	ceramic	sherd	fwe, grn pnt
CbDd-2:497	35	2	ceramic	sherd	fwe, blue & red pnt
CbDd-2:498	35	3	jasper	biface edge	red
CbDd-2:499	35	3	argillite	flake	
CbDd-2:500	35	3	quartz	flakes	n=4

Table 1. Artifacts from CbDd-2, 1999 (continued)

<i>Catalog No.</i>	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Lot</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Portion</i>	<i>Notes</i>
CbDd-2:501	35	3	bone	mammal	n=7
CbDd-2:502	36	2	quartz	flakes	n=5
CbDd-2:503	36	2	bone	mammal	n=8
CbDd-2:504	36	2	tooth	deer?	
CbDd-2:505	36	3	quartz	flakes	n=2
CbDd-2:506	36	3	ballast flint?		n=4
CbDd-2:507	36	3	bone	fish	n=11
CbDd-2:508	36	3	bone	bird	n=16
CbDd-2:509	36	3	bone	mammal	n=4
CbDd-2:510	36	3	tooth	fragments	n=5
CbDd-2:511	36	3	botanical	cornus	n=2
CbDd-2:512	36	3	botanical	cornus	n=2
CbDd-2:513	34	2	coin	penny	1956, USA

Small sherds of Late Woodland pottery were recovered in the shell matrix (lot 3) in units 32 and 33. One has faint impressions of cord-wrapped stick. The colour and texture of the paste, along with the presence of small vesicles which may be a result of the original shell temper having been removed in solution by acidic ground water, all point to a Late Woodland (AD 1000 to 1534) origin.

In summary, the few tiny sherds of earthenware found in 1999 are consistent with finds from other years. The pottery reveals a human occupation dating back nearly two millennia at this site.

Lithics

Local use of stone in prehistoric times fits into two main categories. One is the use of soft red minerals and rocks to produce red ochre powder. The other way it was used was to produce chopping, cutting and scraping tools.

Evidence for the production of red ochre comes in the form of small fragments of red "paint stones" exhibiting multiple wear facets, identifiable by the minute striations produced by abrading the paint stone against material such as sandstone. Discarded nodules of hematite and ferruginous argillite are very common in the northern part of the site, but only one nodule with wear facets was recovered from the 6 m² excavated in 1999.

The ubiquity of these artifacts, intermingled with animal bone and other food refuse, suggests that much of the food may have been consumed at feasts, for it was at these events that the Mi'kmaq anointed themselves and their possessions with red ochre (c.f., LeClercq 1910:97). Red ochre was also used during funerary rites and in preparation for war; feasts are often associated with both these activities. Abundant evidence shows that the Late Woodland Mi'kmaq made extensive use of red ochre on Shediac Island, implying a lively social calendar.

Evidence for the manufacture and use of stone tools comes mainly in the form of flakes removed during manufacture or resharpening. However, one nearly complete biface (CbDd-2:426) was recovered (figure 3a), the first this site has produced. It was found in a shell deposit, so it is tempting to affiliate it with the Late Woodland, where most pottery from this period occurs, but the degree of mixing evident throughout the site means that we cannot rule out it being a Middle Woodland artifact, contemporaneous with the dentate-stamped pottery. The manufacture and use of stemmed quartzite points has roots in the Maritime Archaic tradition, over five millennia ago, and appears to have persisted in the Maritimes, perhaps while various other forms, including notched points, were being made as well.

Although quantitative data are unavailable, the occurrence of Woodland stemmed quartzite points seems higher in Prince Edward Island than elsewhere in the Maritimes. If real, this pattern may reflect a regional persistence of the stemmed-point tradition at the northern margins of the Maritimes, while stone tool styles on the mainland were more varied due to more extensive contact with peoples in the St. Lawrence Valley and New England.

The flakes include a green-grey argillite (n=7), red rhyolite (4), red jasper (n=2), jaspagate (n=1), chalcedony (n=2), white quartz (n=16), and ballast flint (n=4). Tan quartzite flakes are curiously absent, and were not a common find in the northern part of the site either. This could be interpreted as suggesting the tan quartzite biface (figure 3a) was not made nor sharpened at the site, but was brought in from another location. I have theorized (Leonard 1999) that Shediac Island may have been a meeting place for Mi'kmaq from Northern New Brunswick and P.E.I., who converged at Shediac en route to the Bay of Fundy, or simply met there to socialize and trade at a mutually convenient location during the warm months.

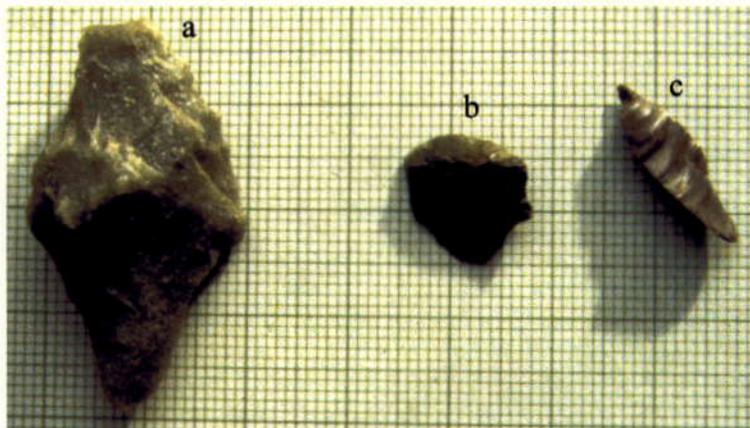


Figure 3. Lithic artifacts from CbDd-2, 1999.

The artifact in the middle of the above photo (3b) is a dorsal flake broken off a scraper made from mustard jasper, probably from the Scots Bay source near Cape Blomidon, N.S.. Flake scars from the steep distal edge of the scraper are visible on the edge of the artifact closest to the top of the photo.

The third artifact is a flake of red jasper, also probably from the Bay of Fundy sources. Another flake of this material (CbDd-2:448) has retouch flake scars on one surface, indicating it was removed from a larger biface either intentionally, or accidentally during use.

Flakes of argillite and quartz are most numerous, a general site trend. Less common are red rhyolite, chalcedony and jaspagate. The red rhyolite is relatively rare, but known from a side-notched biface collected on Shediac Island in 1913 by W. J. Wintemberg, stored at the Canadian Museum of Civilization. The source of the tan chalcedony is unknown. The jaspagate has the appearance of specimens from Washademoak Lake stored at the New Brunswick Museum.

The most intriguing of all the lithic artifacts are actually historic period artifacts: three flakes of what appears to be ballast flint, typically a grey to greenish chalcedony, often with a chalky cortex on nodules. Ballast flint was loaded on ships before they left England, then heaved overboard at the port-of-call before loading with fish, furs, lumber, or other resources for the return voyage. It is at least as good for flint-knapping as any chalcedonies in the Maritimes, and was used in Britain for several hundred thousand years during the paleolithic. However, evidence of its use as a raw material in the New World is rare. By the time trade with the British Isles had commenced, the Mi'kmaq had long abandoned flint-knapping as a way of making knives, projectile points, and scrapers; for a century or more, they traded with Basque, French, and Portuguese for iron knives, axes, fleshers, and scrap that they hammered into projectile points.

The first British trade vessels entered Shediac Bay in the 1790's, at which time the Mi'kmaq were sharing the area with Acadians and a sole British citizen, William Hannington, who had arrived in 1784 and began trading soon thereafter (Webster 1936:10). Since the Shediac Mi'kmaq had had access to European goods for two centuries at that point, two questions arise: did the craft of flint-knapping survive for two hundred years, and if it did, what was being made, if the flakes were produced in the process of making an implement? One suggestion is that the Mi'kmaq retained flint-knapping skills in order to maintain or manufacture gun flints (David Christianson, personal communication, 1999), as long as they were in use.

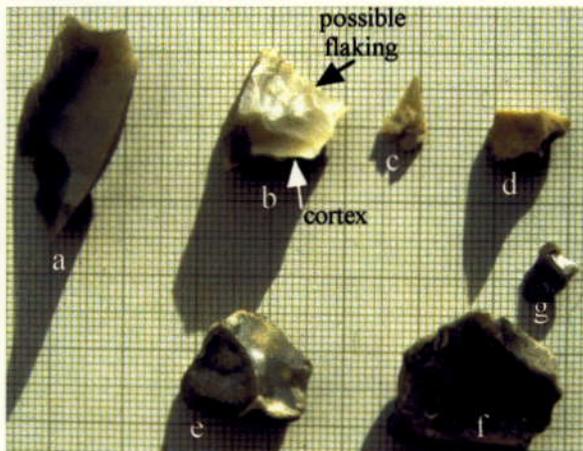


Figure 4. Ballast flint from CbDd-2, 1999.

- a. grey, translucent flake, no cortex
- b. tan, possible flaking on surface, cortex
- c. dark tan, possible flake
- d. dark tan, nodule, no flaking
- e. ballast flint nodule, no flaking
- f. ballast flint nodule, no flaking
- g. ballast flint nodule, no flaking

In figure 4, a, e, f and g are all typical ballast flint. However, 4a (CbDd-2:429) is a flake, with no cortex. It has two sharp edges but shows no sign of use as a cutting implement. It has flake scars, with percussion ripples, suggesting it was the product of a lithic reduction process yielding some form of stone tool.

Figure 4b (CbDd-2:430) is a tan chalcedony, but has some chalky cortex on the facet

opposite the edge which bears six or seven tiny flake scars, much like edge retouch. The cortex indicates it was not a part of a formed tool. The flake scars are not as fresh as those on flake 4a, so the possible retouch on 4b may be much older. This artifact is labelled as ballast flint mainly because of the chalky cortex, but it could be from an eastern North American source, and date to the prehistoric period. Dr. Robert Grantham, geologist at the Nova Scotia Museum, does not know of a source of the tan flint in the Maritimes. Gunflints made of this caramel-coloured are known from the Maritimes as well, so 4b may have arrived here as part of a finished artifact.

In summary, the lithic assemblage from 1999 provides the first stemmed biface from CbDd-2, as well as an informative sub-assemblage of flakes and nodules from historic and prehistoric times.

Faunal remains

As in past seasons, the area excavated in 1999 yielded a proliferation of bones, teeth, and shells from a variety of creatures. A classificatory breakdown of the assemblage is presented in table 2.

Table 2. Preliminary classification of faunal remains from CbDd-2, 1999.

<i>Class</i>	<i>Faunal remains</i>
fish	bone: 40
bird	bone: 72
mammal	bone: 182, teeth: 10

The fish bones are mainly vertebrae, 2 mm to 4 mm in diameter, from fish about the size of herring or brook trout. In three seasons, over 500 tiny fish bones have been recovered from the site, through the use of very fine sieves. None have been identified to species.

The bird bone fragments are mainly hollow shaft sections from wings and legs of birds such as grouse and waterfowl. The interior of one shaft section is stippled with medullary bone, which develops in female birds during a three to four week ovulation period, after which it is used to form the eggshells (Gilbert et al. 1985). Because the nesting season of most waterfowl and upland game birds is known, identifying the skeletal elements with medullary bone to species allows one to determine the timing of the bird's death with some accuracy. It probably indicates a spring hunt, but some species lay more than one clutch of eggs, extending their nesting season into early summer.

Mammal bone fragments outnumber other classes, but this cannot be taken as an indicator of relative importance in the Mi'kmaq diet. An in-depth faunal analysis must be carried out in order to provide statistically valid totals. Nevertheless, a few observations can be made on the basis of a preliminary examination.

Most of the mammal bones are fragmentary, a result of the Mi'kmaq practice of crushing bones to extract marrow. This makes identification difficult or impossible. However, enough diagnostic skeletal elements are preserved in this assemblage to permit tentative identification. One intact phalange appears to be from a bear paw. Three of the teeth may be dog. The enamel is worn deeply on one carnassial, indicating the animal was old when it died.

Dog bones were found in the 1990 dig. The Mi'kmaq loved their dogs, but also consumed them on occasions which called for a dog feast. According to Nicolas Denys, a Mi'kmaq's wealth "was in proportion to their Dogs, and as a testimony to a friend of the esteem in which they held him, they give him that dog to eat which they valued the most: a mark of friendship" (Denys 1908:430). Among the Maliseet in the 1690's, a dog feast was used to enlist participants in a military campaign (Gyles 1869:44). Like many cultures in northeastern North America, the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet threw dog feasts to mark special occasions.

One of the season's most remarkable finds is a portion of the leg bone of a large mammal, perhaps moose, which was discarded after a longitudinal groove had been cut in it (figure 5).

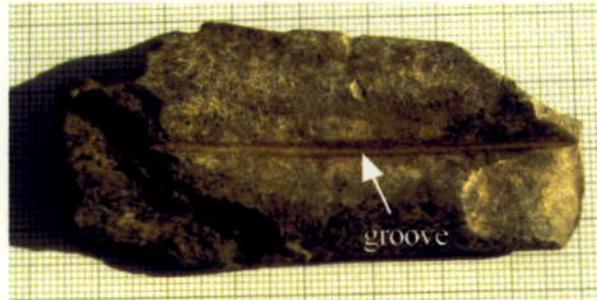


Figure 5. Section of worked large mammal long bone from unit 31 (CbDd-2:452).

This bone is in the process of being cut into workable blanks by the groove-and-splinter method. A stone graving tool is worked back and forth to form a groove. Sand or other abrasives can be added to speed the cutting. When the groove is deep enough, a stone wedge called a *pièce esquillé* is hammered into the groove with enough force to splinter the bone sections apart. A white quartz *pièce esquillé* (CbDd-2:487) was recovered nearby, in excavation unit 34.

Once detached, the bone splinter would be soaked in water to soften it prior to being ground and cut into the shape of a harpoon head, or other bone implement. This technology was widespread among hunting cultures, and is of great antiquity, having been used by the first modern humans who moved into Europe about 40,000 years ago, during the Upper Paleolithic.

In the tooth sub-assembly, at least three other mammalian species are represented along with dog. Incisors and molars of beaver and muskrat are present. The other species is either moose, deer, or, if the fragments date to the historic period, cow. However, on a preliminary basis, deer appears to be the most likely candidate.

Although the site is very rich in shell, only a chondrophore, or hinge section of a soft-shelled clam (*Mya arenaria*) was saved, from unit 25. This is added to the collection of clam chondrophores saved from other areas of the site, in anticipation of conducting seasonality studies on them. The principles involved are the same as for seasonality determination in oyster shells, which was carried out in 1991 (Leonard 1996).

Faunal remains from the 1990 excavation were identified and included in my dissertation (Leonard 1996). However, funding for analysis of the 1998 and '99 faunal remains has not been established. If the interpretive potential of the park is to be fully realized, faunal analysis must

be done. The resulting species list and details on seasonal availability would enhance ecotourism-oriented interpretation of the park's natural history. Furthermore, it helps us understand the human impact on local ecology.

Floral remains

The same is true of the botanical finds of the 1998 and 1999 digs. Both seasons, all fill from the prehistoric level was bagged, brought to the mainland, partially dried, measured, and poured into a vat of water. All material which floats, including ancient and recent plant remains, was trapped in sieves, the finest of which has 0.5 mm openings. This process enables the entrapment of very tiny seeds, as well as larger specimens. Through this process, a considerable quantity of archaeobotanical material has been saved for future analysis.

The next step involves examining the material under a microscope, and selecting identifiable specimens. Using a comparative collection and reference books, the seeds can often be identified to genus or species. Only charred seeds are considered prehistoric. Once the species identification had been made, one turns to ethnographic description of uses for that plant among aboriginal cultures in North America or elsewhere to draw analogies with the Mi'kmaq's ancient use of it. Like the faunal analysis, this archaeobotanical information enhances an ecotourism-oriented interpretive framework. It is in the park's best interest to obtain this information. Funding for floral and faunal analyses should be built into future budgets.

Although the bags of float remain unanalysed, several charred botanical specimens which were captured in mesh, along with other material that sank in the flotation tank, are identifiable and are listed in table 1. These include eleven charred seeds of *Cornus rugosa*, the round-leaved dogwood, a very common species in the 14th century A.D. Mi'kmaq burial site on Skull Island; three charred fragments of hazelnut shell; and the rather unusual find of an entire charred berry (probably blueberry). More finds and interpretations would result from further analysis.

Historic occupation

The historic artifacts represent a variety of activities carried out by diverse groups from the late 16th century to the present. Although the artifacts have changed with the times, there is a consistency in the functions they performed. They tell of people adapting to a coastal ecotone, where they had access to marine, terrestrial, riverine and wetland food resources. Agriculture augmented nature's harvest for Mi'kmaqs at least as early as 1713, when they cultivated fields of maize (Arsenault 1714). Later, Europeans practiced subsistence agriculture while preserving mature forest reserves on the southern 100 acres of the island (Robinson n.d.). During the 1750's, military activities left a legacy of sites and artifacts in this normally peaceful setting.

Although no remains from the 16th century have been identified yet from Shediac Bay sites, copper kettles that the Mi'kmaq obtained from Basque whalers and placed in burials along with other European goods from the late 1500's dot the south shore of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, evidence of widespread interaction between natives and newcomers at that time. The Mi'kmaq of Jedaick must have been as involved with the European mariners as were their neighbours who occupied similar estuarine niches from Chaleur Bay to the Strait of Canso.

Mi'kmaq occupation of Shediac Island continued into the late 1700's and in fact appears to have continued until abandonment of the island after WW II. A local resident's grandmother, who was born on Shediac Island and married an Acadian man, is claimed by all whom I have interviewed to have been Mi'kmaq.

The treaty signed by Chief Claude Atouash on June 25, 1761 (see Appendix A) must have marked a turning point in the history of the "Jedaick tribe of Indians." For the previous fifty years, they had been allied with the French in conflict with the British "Red Coats." During the turbulent 1750's, Chief Atouash and his warriors captured British prisoners. How many we do not know, but certainly a sufficient number to warrant the author of the treaty between Chief Atouash and King George III compelling Atouash to swear that: "all English Prisoners made by myself or my tribe shall be set at Liberty" (see Appendix A, paragraph 6).

In fact, the British were so wary of Atouash and his warriors that another condition of the treaty forced him to hand over two members of his tribe to the British. These unfortunates would be kept at Fort Cumberland (Fort Beauséjour renamed by the British post-1755), or elsewhere in Nova Scotia, and could be exchanged for others from Jedaick whenever the Crown requested.

This recently uncovered document lends credence to W. F. Ganong's (1899:292) conclusion that the earthworks on Skull Island (formerly attached to Shediac Island) are the ruins of a fort constructed and manned by the Mi'kmaq. Weaponry recovered on Skull Island include an early- to mid-18th century French military flintlock musket hammer mechanism found on the beach below the western end of the remaining rampart on Skull Island, frozen in the the fully-cocked position (figure 6), as well as two multiple-shot cast-iron balls (figure 7). The cast iron balls were fired from cannon. Perhaps the British prisoners were kept in a stockade in the Skull Island fort.

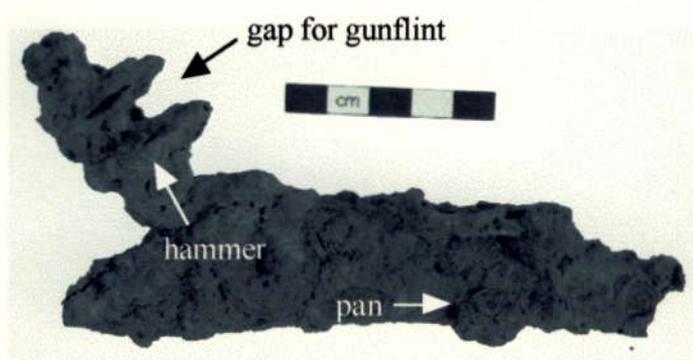


Figure 6. Flintlock mechanism from Skull Island.



Figure 7. Multiple shot balls.

Two small lead shot balls were found in the CbDd-2 midden excavated in 1999. They are the functional historic period equivalent of the contracting stem stone projectile point, described earlier. The ballast flint discussed earlier is historic as well, although it was discussed along with the prehistoric lithics. If the ballast flint flakes were yielded by the process of fabricating or repairing gun flints, they too bear testimony to the use of weaponry, in the hunt and in intercultural conflict, during historic times.

The presence of beads in the shell matrix adds the element of Mi'kmaq-European trade to the overall picture of human interaction on historic Shediac Island. Five white beads, one dark green bead, and another that was burned black, comprise the assemblage from the 1999 excavations. All are seed beads, tiny specimens between 2 and 3 mm in diameter. The Mi'kmaq used them to create beadwork on leather footwear and garments, such as moccasins and cloaks.

During the nineteenth century, Europeans eventually came to out-number the Mi'kmaq on the island. In any case, the remaining Mi'kmaq were probably using the same artifacts as their neighbours, making them archaeologically indistinguishable.

Artifacts of the 19th century reflect the well-documented activities on Shediac Island, especially farming and fishing. A deposit of pitch or tar nodules along with iron scraps and a decomposed metal bucket were found in the 1999 excavation. A descendant of Meier Robinson, the Norwegian sailor who kept the lighthouse on the island and farmed the property over the CbDd-2 site, informed me that his ancestors kept a boathouse in the vicinity of the 1999 excavations. The pitch or tar nodules may have come from the caulking of the many wooden boats built and repaired there by Meier's son, Willie (Robinson n.d.: 15).

Island life is recorded thoughtfully in the Robinson family history. The descendant mentioned above kindly provided me with a copy. It provides a first-person account of life on the island from about 1875 until WW II. For example, it reveals that in 1897, a school was built and a teacher hired to educate the 30 pupils derived from the 17 families inhabiting the island (Robinson n.d.: 11).

Even then, we are told, visitors flocked to the island in the summer to enjoy the beaches. This practice lived on after the abandonment of the island in the years following WW II, as shown by a 1956 United States penny and part of a Pepsi bottle made the same year, found in units 34 and 30.

Artifacts such as expended .22 calibre shell casings and a metal pail testify to the continuity of hunting and clam digging up to present times.

Conclusion

As demonstrated with great clarity during January's storm surge, we are losing our coastlines, and there is little we can do to resist rising sea-levels. The story of two thousand years of human adaptation to the coast is concealed in the soil, some of it now laying in clumps on the beaches of Shediac Island, Skull Island, and others like them along the south shore of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. If we don't act now to salvage and preserve this information, it will be lost to future generations of local residents and visitors who crave a deeper understanding our species' track record in the Shediac Bay area.

The Town of Shediac has shown a genuine concern for preserving the cultural heritage of the island by establishing the park and ensuring that archaeological salvage has been a part of its operations for two years running. They recognize the value of investing in cultural tourism. The positive response from site visitors both years confirms the wisdom of their strategy.

In the long run, reliance on the Environmental Trust Fund for the park's operation does not appear to hold much promise, considering the fiscal restructuring of the current provincial government. Given the success of the Irving-sponsored development at the nearby *Dune de Buctouche*, perhaps a municipal-corporate partnership holds the best hope for developing the park on Shediac Island as a world-class cultural and ecological tourism destination.

Since provincial archaeological services are now in a subsecretariat of the Department of Education, support might be sought for further excavation on the island within a framework of developing educational modules for various age levels, in both languages, based on the history revealed in the archaeology of Shediac Island.

Whatever the source of funding, the salvage of the CbDd-2 site should continue. Given the current erosion rate of about one foot per year, the site will disappear in less than 20 years.

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Appendix A

Treaty of Peace and Friendship

Concluded by the Honorable Jonathan Belcher Esq. President of His Majesty's Council and Commander in Chief in and over His Majesty's Province of Nova Scotia or Acadia etc, etc, etc, with Claude Atouash Chief of the Jedaick Tribe of Indians at Halifax in the Province of Nova Scotia or Acadia.

I Claude Atouash for myself and the Jedaick Tribe of Indians of which I am Chief; Do acknowledge the jurisdiction and Dominion of His Majesty King George the third over the Territories of Nova Scotia or Acadia, and we do make submission to His Majesty in the most perfect, ample and Solemn manner.

And I do promise for myself and my Tribe that I nor they shall not molest any of his Majesty's Subjects or their Dependants in their Settlements already made or to be hereafter made, or in carrying on their Commerce, or in anything whatever within this the province of His said Majesty or elsewhere.

And if any Insults, Robbery or Outrage shall happen to be committed by any of my Tribe Satisfaction and Restitution shall be made to the person or persons Injured.

That neither I, nor my Tribe shall in any manner entice any of His said Majesty's Troops or Soldiers to desert, nor in any manner assist in conveying them away, but on the contrary will do our utmost endeavours to bring them back to the Company, Regiment, Fort or Garrison to which they shall belong.

That if any Quarrel or Misunderstanding shall happen betwixt myself and the English or between them and any of my Tribe, neither I nor they shall take any private Satisfaction or Revenge, but we will apply for Redress according to the Laws established in his said Majesty's Dominions.

That all English Prisoners made by myself or my tribe shall be set at Liberty, and that we will use our utmost endeavours to prevail on the other tribes to do the same, if any prisoners shall happen to be in their Hands.

And I do further promise for myself and my Tribe that we will not either directly nor indirectly assist any of the Enemies of His most sacred Majesty King George the third, his Heirs or Successors, nor hold any manner of Commerce, Traffick nor intercourse with them but on the contrary will as much as may be in our power discontinue and make known to His Majesty's Governor, any ill designs which may be formed or contrived against His Majesty's Subjects. And I do further Engage that we will not Traffick, Barter or Exchange any Commodities in any manner, but with such persons or the Managers of such Truckhouses as shall be appointed or established by His Majesty's Governor at Fort Cumberland or elsewhere in Nova Scotia or Acadia.

And for the more effectual Security of the dice performance of this Treaty and every part thereof I do promise and engage[?] that a certain number of persons of my Tribe which shall not be lefs in number than two persons shall on or by the thirtieth day of September next reside as hostages at Fort Cumberland or at such other place or places in this province of Nova Scotia or Acadia as shall be appointed for that purpose by his Majesty's Governor of said Province, which Hostages shall be exchanged for a like number of my Tribe when requested.

And all these foregoing Articles and every one of them, made with

I do promise for myself and in behalf of my Tribe that we will most strictly [obey?] and observe in the most solemn manner In Witnefs whereof I have hereunto put my mark and Seal at Halifax in Nova Scotia this Twenty fifth day of June. One Thousand Seven hundred and Sixty one and in the First Year of His Majesty's Reign.

his
Claude Atouash
mark

Source:

Indian Affairs, 1761-1864, Univerity of New Brunswick Library Archives and Special Collections, MG H54. Material collected for Lord Beaverbrook by R.A. Tweedie in 1956.

Transcription:

Dr. Kevin Leonard, 1999.