



Artefacts excavated from a site on Antigonish Harbour, dating from perhaps 2500-3000 years ago

**KMKNO
ARCHAEOLOGY
DEPARTMENT**

From the Ground Up:
**Archaeology
Newsletter**

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IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the Assembly



Chief Wilbert Marshall
Lead Chief of Culture,
Heritage & Archaeology

Being the Lead Chief for the Culture, Heritage and Archeology Portfolio for the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs has allowed me to see, first-hand some of our artefacts, to learn more about our history and it has given me even more reasons to be proud of our incredible heritage.

We all know that the Mi'kmaq have never ceded Rights or Title to our lands and that we have a rich history and culture that must be protected, preserved and celebrated. We have always been proud of who we are and know that the lands of Nova Scotia can tell us a lot about how our ancestors lived.

On behalf of the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs, the Archaeology Research Division at Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO), with our Staff

Archaeologist Dr. Heather MacLeod-Leslie, conducts archaeological digs and researches any findings to ensure that the cultural property of the Mi'kmaq is treated with respect and that data collected will be accessible for years to come.

Many of the projects we work on - like the return of the Altar to my home community - and the artefacts that we find are a vital part of our Mi'kmaq story. They link us to our ancestors and provide us with something very unique that we will be able to share with the generations who will follow us.

In this issue of the Archaeology Newsletter, you'll read more about what projects we have been working on and how this important work has supported what we do as a Nation.

Our Rights. Our Future.

Chapel Island Altar

Church Altar and its return to Potlotek...
Page 2

CHA Strategic Plan

The first step in creating tools to support the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia for culture, heritage and archaeology.....
Page 4

Keeping a Watchful Eye

Monitoring the Boat Harbour Job Site *Page 5*

Efforts to see the return of this Altar have been ongoing for decades, & approval for the move has finally happened.

Potlotek Altar

The altar of Chapel Island was returned home to Potlotek for the 2015 St. Anne's Mission after a 200 year absence.

According to Potlotek historian, Lillian B. Marshall, the altar was given to the Mi'kmaq as a gift in the 1700's. As the English and French fought during that time period, French churches were burned to the ground, oral Mi'kmaq history tells us that the altar was moved by the Mi'kmaq several times to protect it. It finally saw rest in 1860 and has been taken care of by the parish of Sacred Heart Church in Johnstown, since it opened its doors.

In the Winter of 2015, Chief Wilbert Marshall received a letter of support from the Assembly to have the altar from the chapel at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church in Johnstown, Richmond County (Unama'ki) returned to the Mi'kmaq at Potlotek. Efforts to see this return had been ongoing for decades, but approval and preparations for the move had finally begun.

In March 2015, KMKNO's Archaeologist visited the altar to do a preliminary assessment of the condition and to review some of the needs that would need to be considered before trying to move, ensuring it was

protected from damage. Based on this visit she provided a report to Chief Marshall and Lillian Marshall, Community Elder and long-time defender of the altar coming home to Potlotek.

On June 24, 2015 consent was given to the Potlotek Chief and Council to have the altar returned. The altar was moved by Parks Canada from Sacred Heart in Johnstown where arrangements to clean the altar have begun. Parks Canada staff helped return the altar on July 20th, 2015 when it left Parks Canada - Fortress of Louisbourg and began its journey home. The altar was returned to Chapel Island (Mniku), also a National Historic site of Canada, for the 2015 St. Anne's Mission.

A welcoming ceremony took place on Mniku to welcome home the long awaited altar on July 20th, 2015 with a catholic mass that followed. Many who attended wore traditional Mi'kmaq regalia and came from all communities to celebrate the historic return of the altar.

A documentary, funded by the Tripartite Forum, was filmed and shared both the historical memories of the altar and the wonderful homecoming. The documentary film is titled "Patkwi Alasutmaq" and can be found on YouTube.



Photo (right): Altar at Johnstown chapel. The icon of Our Lady of Guadeloupe was added by Johnstown congregation and was not part of original altar, so it will stay with the Sacred Heart Church.

Bedford Barrens

KMKNO's Staff Archaeologist sits on the Tripartite Forum's Culture & Heritage Committee and one of the projects this committee has been working on is ensuring both access for the Mi'kmaq and the protection of the Bedford Barrens Petroglyphs. In November 2014, the Assembly passed a resolution that they did not want to place a National Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (NHSMBC) plaque at the site to commemorate the sacred place, but rather design a Mi'kmaq Special Place Plaque. This was communicated to the NHSMBC and several designs were created by Mi'kmaq artist Gerald Gloade, who also sits on the Tripartite Committee. The designs were presented to the Assembly in June 2015 and they chose this image (*right*) as the final design. This plaque will be put at the Bedford Barrens location during Mi'kmaq History Month 2016.



Negotiations Research

KMKNO's Archaeologist has begun to sift through records of recorded archaeological sites to identify which sites represent use and harvesting sites, versus those which are habitation sites and may represent district or inter-district level mawimi places. This type of research helps support the Negotiation Team in order for them to clearly demonstrate specific use and occupation to the Crown in support of Rights and Title implementation.

The research is being organized by watershed unit, since the rivers, lakes, streams and other shores

have been such an important part of the landscape and travel ways for us. The first watershed being analyzed is the "1DD" watershed, where the Gaspereau River and Gaspereau Lake are located in the traditional territories of Glooscap and Annapolis Valley Mi'kmaq Communities. If you have information about traditional living places or harvesting sites in Nova Scotia you wish to share with Heather, please send her an email as she would be delighted to include your knowledge in this research. She can be reached by email at:

[heathermacleod-leslie@
mikmaqrighs.com](mailto:heathermacleod-leslie@mikmaqrighs.com)

Mersey Hydro

KMKNO has begun discussions with Nova Scotia Power Inc. (NSPI) about proposed work on the Mersey River system dams. We have been involved in the archaeology as well as work plan development. NSPI has also begun discussions with Acadia First Nation directly.

Acadia has asked KMKNO to participate in their meetings with NSPI as a resource in support of the community. These began in January 2016 and has created a strong foundation for discussions with the Mi'kmaq in this area.

Culture, Heritage & Archaeology Strategy

The lands, waters and resources of Mi'kma'ki, our traditional territory, have always sustained, inspired, defined, and protected us – and we them. The Mi'kmaq are resilient, proud and have intuitively maintained a solid foundation for our children and our children's children through our Mi'kmaw heritage, language, culture, spirituality and history. In Mi'kma'ki, communities and people differ from district to district, but ultimately, it is a connection of Mi'kmaw pride and respect for each other, the lands, waters and resources, our Elders and our individual successes that make us who we are.

Although we have a strong culture, many Nova Scotians do not understand the unique position of the Mi'kmaq in this Province, culturally or legally, which leads to stereotypes, misinformation and conflict. It is important that our Mi'kmaw leadership actively encourage and promote visibility and understanding of Mi'kmaw culture and heritage within the Province of Nova Scotia.

There is a growing desire by Mi'kmaq to rekindle our language, traditions and culture. Mi'kmaw, young and old, are taking active steps to speak our language, practice Mi'kmaw customs, connect with Mi'kmaw Elders and natural resources.

Based on discussions at a 2014 Culture, Heritage and Archaeology Workshop, a document has been developed to identify the goals and

priorities for the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia related to Mi'kmaw culture, heritage and archaeology. It will help to support the Assembly in their decision-making and relationship building in government-to-government and government-to-industry matters.

Strategic Priorities and Goals:

1. Telling our “Mi'kmaw Stories” – having the Mi'kmaq tell our own stories, rather than non-Mi'kmaw sources and influences.

2. Mi'kmaq Ownership of Our Own Culture - ancestral artefacts from Nova Scotia legally repatriated to the Mi'kmaw Nation

3. Self-Governance Management and Co-Management - Mi'kmaw governments creating partnerships so we can create opportunities to bring Mi'kmaw culture to a common audience.

4. Capacity Building - to grow the community's capacity to meet the values, principles and goals expressed in the strategic plan.

5. Expression, Celebration and Promotion of Mi'kmaw Culture, Heritage & Archaeology - contin-

uing to work and develop ways that increase the preservation, promotion and implementation of Mi'kmaw culture into the daily life of Nova Scotians.

All Mi'kmaq need to have a say in how their heritage, language, culture, history and contemporary arts are nurtured, preserved, promoted, and interpreted. A key component of this plan is to bring this dialogue to our Mi'kmaw communities for discussion and input. It is important to ensure that the values and principles reflect the views and concerns of Mi'kmaq about how our culture and heritage are protected, interpreted, managed, preserved and promoted.

The Culture, Heritage and Archeology Strategic Plan was adopted by the Assembly in October 2015. This Plan is a living document that can adapt to new information and shift in needs and goals of the Nation as required. It is simply the first step in creating tools to support the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia for culture, heritage and archaeology.



Photo Above: Participants of the 2014 Culture, Heritage and Archeology Workshop

Gaspereau Lake

Nova Scotia Power Inc. (NSPI) must bring the dam structure at Gaspereau Lake to current safety standards set by a national body. Through KMKNO, NSPI informed and engaged the Mi'kmaq, via the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs in November 2007. Since that time, NSPI has presented 6 dam re-designs (to varying stages) based on discussions with KMKNO. The Assembly recently re-opened discussions with NSPI as another 150 square metres will require excavation.

Since 2007, CRM Group Limited has excavated 1,018 square metres at Gaspereau Lake Reservoir, not including shovel tests. Since this

time, approximately 280,000 artefacts have been recovered with perhaps another 20,000 recovered by many different archaeologists from 1950 – 2006.

There were areas of concern listed by the Mi'kmaq, including potential burials, noted by having once held a wooden cross & borrow pit, which have been left undisturbed.

Possible next steps for this site, pending Assembly and community discussion are for NSPI to complete their planned archaeological excavation to ensure that the pathway of the new dam feature is clear of artefacts and that the materials and deposits are recorded and protected from destruction, and to have any artefacts repatriated to the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia.

Northern Pulp Pipeline

In May 2014, Northern Pulp of Pictou had a pipeline burst that carried effluent from the pulp mill for discharge to Boat Harbour. The burst occurred at what has been traditionally known as Indian Cross Point. Protestors immediately went to the site and Chief, Council and members of Pictou Landing Mi'kmaq Community expressed their pain and dissatisfaction with the mill's responses to the dangers their business has imposed on the community for decades. The pipeline burst was a last straw, given that it occurred in the vicinity of known burial grounds. KMKNO immediately responded to the

request of Chief Andrea Paul to look for the burial ground and determine the threat of contamination and impact to the sacred place posed by the leaked effluent and the proposed work to repair the damaged pipeline. The area of effluent and pipeline repair was determined not to pose a threat to the locations of cultural or burial sensitivity and repair work monitored by onsite archaeological expertise, including into the wee hours of the night. Through follow-up discussions with former residents of the area, KMKNO has identified another area of possible cultural significance and hopes to return to survey this new area with Chief Paul at a later date.

Gaspereau Lake:

There were areas of concern listed by the Mi'kmaq, including potential burials, noted by having once held a wooden cross & borrow pit, which have been left undisturbed.



Photo above: Night time Monitoring of excavation to ensure no threats to burial locations

Call Before You Dig

Did you know that sometimes, the simple impact of a piece of heavy-treaded or tracked heavy equipment can do enough disturbance to destroy an archaeological site? Archaeological protection and management is always cheapest when it is part of the early planning stages of any development project. If your band is planning a development, please remember to include the assessment for potential impacts to known or yet-unknown archaeological sites – these sites are important evidence in the discussions of Rights implementation and Title. If you're not sure where to begin, please call our Archaeologist at KMKNO, Heather MacLeod-Leslie, for advice on how to best proceed.



- Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office works on behalf of the Assembly of NS Mi'kmaq Chiefs in the negotiations and consultations between the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, the Province of Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada.

KMKNO was developed by the Mi'kmaq for the Mi'kmaq.

The purpose of these negotiations and consultations is to implement our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights from the Treaties signed by our ancestors in the 1700's.



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Mi'kmaq Rights

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The Five (5) Pillars of Mi'kmaw Values:

1. To achieve recognition, acceptance, implementation and protection of treaty, title, and other rights of the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia;
2. To develop systems of Mi'kmaq governance and resource management;
3. To revive, promote and protect a healthy Mi'kmaq identity;
4. To obtain the basis for a shared economy and social development; and
5. To negotiate toward these goals with community involvement and support.