

## ARCHAEOLOGY IN TERRA NOVA NATIONAL PARK

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In 2007 Terra Nova National Park conducted two archaeology projects: an assessment of a new trail development at Salton's Brook and a monitoring project for known sites throughout the park.

With plans for a new trail to be constructed across the brook from the Visitor Centre an archaeological assessment was conducted in the spring of 2007. The goal of this assessment was to determine the impact of the construction on any cultural resources present in the area. Previous archaeological (Tuck 1980) and historical (Major 1983) research indicated that this location was the site of a sawmill operation during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The assessment, conducted by the author with the assistance of park staff, consisted of pedestrian survey of the trail route looking for indications of cultural resources visible on the surface, supplemented by the excavation of shovel test pits in areas of high potential. Three cabin sites representing mill-workers' habitations were identified along with the remains of a road leading to the brook.

*Cabin Site #1* is an oblong clearing, 16 metres long and 7 metres wide. It contains several clusters of artifacts on the surface including fragments of glass and metal, and several pieces of cast iron stoves. A small, moss covered mound is located at the north end of the clearing. A test pit on the edge of this mound recovered glass bottles, metal cans, nails and fragments of canvas flooring. This midden probably relates to the abandonment of the cabin, when any unwanted/non-portable items were left behind in a pile. Test pits and clearing of the trail along the west side of this cabin site yielded additional artifacts. Beneath the spruce trees at the northeast corner of the clearing are two small moss covered mounds with metal and glass artifacts protruding from them. These indicate a midden that probably formed during the use of the cabin as the inhabitants discarded empty cans, bottles and other refuse off to the side.

*Cabin Site #2* is a rectangular clearing, 9 metres long and 7 metres wide. It includes a large, low mound in the centre with a couple of metal artifacts poking out. This is likely a refuse midden similar to the one in the first clearing – resulting from abandonment of the cabin. Stove parts are scattered around the edges of the clearing.

Located to the northeast of cabin sites #1 and #2 is a third clearing that likely represents another cabin site though no artifacts or features were observed. This clearing is more overgrown and did not require testing

for the trail, so it is quite possible that cultural features are present. A wooden plank with a cross piece nailed to it may be observed in a cluster of trees at the northwest edge of this clearing.



*Cabin Site, Salton's Brook, Terra Nova National Park (Curtis)*  
*Artifact Analysis*

The majority of artifacts, and in particular, large metal artifacts, were left on site at Salton's Brook. In addition, efforts were made to minimize disturbance to the site. Middens, for example, were identified but not excavated and test pits were restricted to potential trail routes. These actions were taken to preserve the site and its cultural features *in situ*, while providing opportunities for interpretation along the trail. Artifacts that were visible on the surface and left on site were documented with provenience numbers and photographs. Artifacts were collected from test pits and from an area disturbed by the trail in the northwest corner of Cabin Site #1. The most common artifact on the site is the cast iron stove, or rather pieces of it. A total of eleven pieces were observed and left on the site. One piece, a name plate "Ensign", was collected for conservation. The wood-burning stove would have been the centrepiece of the cabin providing both heat and a means of cooking. The fragments of canvas flooring provide additional direct evidence that cabins were built on the site. Though the fragments are too small to reveal the pattern, it consisted of a dark red background with a bright green design.



*Salton's Brook Artifacts, Terra Nova National Park (Curtis)*

Three whole glass bottles were recovered including a brown Javex bottle with the slogan "Javex Whitens". These bottles are typical of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with threads for screw-on metal lids. The ceramic sherds recovered are all plain white fragments, however a basal sherd from one cup is marked "occupied Japan".

Based on these findings recommendations were made regarding the trail route and construction methods to minimize the impact on cultural resources while providing visitors with the opportunity to experience the cultural and natural heritage of the area.

During September 2007 Terra Nova National Park conducted a monitoring project for all known sites within the park. These sites were originally recorded during an archaeological survey led by Tuck (1980) in 1979 with follow up excavations at several sites completed by Sawicki (1981) in 1980. Schwarz (1993) undertook additional salvage work at the Bank site in 1992.

This year's research team included a Parks Canada archaeologist (the author), park staff and representatives from the Federation of Newfoundland Indians and Miawpukek First Nation. At each site we:

- recorded the location by GPS
- examined the area noting visible cultural features and artifacts
- noted site condition and disturbances
- assessed potential threats
- took photographs
- collected artifacts that were exposed on beach surfaces

Among the 21 recorded sites are 9 Aboriginal sites, 11 Historic sites, and 1 site with both Aboriginal and Historic components.

The Aboriginal sites represent 5000 years of human history in the park and all of the cultural groups known to have inhabited Newfoundland. Several of the sites are multi-component thus 5 Maritime Archaic, 4 Palaeoeskimo (both Groswater and Dorset), and 1 Recent Indian component are present. In addition 4 sites could not be assigned to a specific group due to a lack of diagnostic artifacts. These sites are characterized by scatters of lithic tools and flakes that are emerging from along the eroding coastline. Traces of charcoal at some of the sites hint at the presence of buried cultural features. The collected artifacts include a biface, two endblades, a bevelled-slate tool, and a chert core.



*Artifacts Collected in Terra Nova National Park (Curtis)*

The Historic sites include 6 sawmill sites representing the importance of the lumber industry to this area during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These range from small processing stations to large sites with

living areas. Five additional historic sites are represented by traces of various structures.



*Sawmill Site in Terra Nova National Park (Curtis)*

The results of this monitoring project have thus provided up-to-date location and condition information that will form the basis for further cultural resource management and archaeological research activities within the park.

*References Cited*

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