

ANNUAL RESEARCH REPORT I

Activities of the Heritage Conservation Branch  
for the Year 1978

Editorial Committee

Bjorn O. Simonsen  
Ray Kenny  
John McMurdo  
Pauline Rafferty

Government of the Province of British Columbia  
Ministry of the Provincial Secretary and Government Services  
Heritage Conservation Branch  
Victoria, BC

Honourable Evan M. Wolfe  
Minister

Ian Thomson  
Deputy Minister

December 1981

THE DUKE POINT ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT:  
A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON FIELDWORK AND ANALYSIS

by: Donald H. Mitchell  
Rebecca Murray  
Catherine Carlson

Department of Anthropology  
University of Victoria

ABSTRACT

This report contains a brief outline of salvage excavations at four sites situated within the boundaries of Nanaimo's Duke Point Industrial Park. The salvage strategy is described and a preliminary listing of artifact classes and counts is presented. The collection from one site (DgRx 5) has been provisionally separated into two assemblages. Duke Point I, the earlier component, has greater quantities of chipped stone artifacts, few ground stone items, and few bone and antler artifacts. In contrast, Duke Point II has fewer chipped stone artifacts, more ground stone, and more bone and antler. Results of the uncompleted matrix analysis are summarized.

INTRODUCTION

The work outlined in this report involved seven sites, all of which were located within the boundaries of Duke Point Industrial Park, on the Northumberland Channel side of Duke and Jack Points in the Nanaimo city limits (Fig. 1). The archaeological investigation was carried out primarily under a contract between the British Columbia Development Corporation and the University of Victoria, with additional assistance from the Heritage Conservation Branch (which arranged for funds for additional crew), and with the active participation of the Archaeology Division of the British Columbia Provincial Museum.

It was concluded, after reviewing Apland's (1977) heritage resource assessment, and after visiting the project area, that the opportunities for conservation of sites, or even portions of sites, were very limited. Even in those situations where preservation measures might have been attempted, the shoreline and surface modifications proposed by the development were so extensive that we felt there would be an unacceptably high risk

Classified under "Raw Materials" or "Minerals" are two types-quartz fragments which appear to be unmodified and coal fragments which also show no evidence of working. Coal fragments represent 1.3% of the artifact total, but this should be increased since additional pieces of coal have been recovered from the soil samples.

The "historic" artifacts number is over 500 if every nail, glass fragment, or scrap of metal is counted. Noteworthy among the historic artifacts are early-contact manufactured items such as blue faceted trade beads; a bone toothbrush handle; bone buttons; and a large, barbed fish hook. The numerous square-headed nails, china and glass fragments, and iron scraps may show modification and even use wear in some instances.

#### CULTURAL COMPONENTS

Artifacts from eight of the deepest excavation units were laid out to determine if any differences were apparent between early and late deposits. Differences were discernable, some in association with changes in stratigraphy, and these patterns form the basis of a provisional division of the collection into two assemblages: Duke Point I and Duke Point II. Duke Point I, representing the earliest component, is characterized by the following: greater quantities of chipped stone artifacts (excepting quartz flakes); fewer ground stone artifacts; and fewer bone and antler artifacts. The Duke Point II component exhibits the following characteristics: fewer chipped stone artifacts (except quartz flakes) than in the lower component; more ground stone artifacts, especially ground stone beads; and more bone and antler artifacts. The shell artifacts, especially disc beads, are exclusively from the lower component and are mostly from the burials.

Table II gives the frequency occurrence for the various artifact types recovered from eight excavation units. EU 545 is from Area A on the north side of Canoe Pass. Areas B<sub>1</sub> and B<sub>2</sub> are represented by units 133, 215, 296, 300, 943, and 945. One of the two units excavated in Area E, EU 1, has been sorted.