

DECONSTRUCTING THE MCCALLUM SITE

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INTRODUCTION

The whole enterprise of systematically investigating other cultures is *itself* a culturally specific, social enterprise, one that is rooted in and shaped by the interest and belief structures that constitute the context of the researcher (Wylie 1985,134).

WHEN ALISON WYLIE PUBLISHED this statement over twenty years ago, many archaeologists in the North American academic community balked at the idea that archaeological inquiry was not a completely objective, scientific endeavour. The idea that our interpretations of the archaeological record were somehow influenced by our social position or worldview and thus that there may be alternative ways of interpreting the past (Shanks and Tilley 1987) was not an entirely comfortable notion. This was especially so given the dominance of “scientific archaeology” (e.g., Watson, LeBlanc, and Redman 1971), which persists even today (as judged by the content of “flagship” archaeological journals like *American Antiquity*). The notion that our archaeological interpretations could have both social and political implications (Leone, Potter, and Shackel 1987) was perhaps even more uncomfortable, and it was not readily embraced by many practising archaeologists.

Twenty plus years later, most North American archaeologists acknowledge (at least publicly) the existence of the multiple interpretations and values inherent in the archaeological record. However, the fact that books and articles continue to be written about the topic (e.g., Anyon et al. 1997; Echo-Hawk 2000; Echo-Hawk and Zimmerman 2006; Hegmon 2003; Peck, Siegfried, and Oetelaar 2003) suggests that

we have not yet really come to grips with what this means for how archaeology is practised. Indigenous voices, in particular, have not been given equal time in archaeological interpretations, though strides are being made in this direction (e.g., Birt and Copley 2005; Ferguson and Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2006; Lyons 2007). There continues to be a need to examine who we are as archaeologists and how that influences our experience and interpretation of the archaeological record (e.g., Edgeworth 2006).

In this article, I present the history of interpretations of one archaeological site – the Mccallum site, located in the Fraser Valley (Figure 1) – primarily through the eyes of academic archaeologists over a sixty-year period. During that time, the nature of academic archaeology changed, as did the context in which it was practised. My narrative begins with the work of Marian Smith in 1945 and ends with my own research at the Mccallum site in 2004. At one level, retracing the history of the site demonstrates clearly the shift in archaeological practice through time; at another, it speaks to how our view of archaeological “truths” and scientific processes has changed and how that shift influences our interpretation of, and interaction with, the past.

The backdrop for the Mccallum historical review is the Fraser Valley, the home of Stó:lō First Nation. The Fraser Valley, in many respects, is a microcosm of heritage and land-use issues in British Columbia. Since the late nineteenth century, the Stó:lō, non-Aboriginal archaeologists, and non-Aboriginal people needing land for resource extraction (timber, gravel), farming, and settlements have had some interest in the archaeological record of the Fraser Valley. In recent years, the relationship among these stakeholders has intensified with increasing development pressure on the land coupled with Stó:lō Nation’s increasingly active role in managing the archaeological record. This shifting socio-economic backdrop has played a significant role in how archaeology is conducted in the Fraser Valley. The shift is reflected in academic archaeology today both in the increasing prominence of community outreach programs and in the active involvement of First Nations in archaeological projects. Our recent work at the Mccallum site incorporated both of these components.

I have two intertwined goals for this article. The first is to document the history of archaeology and land use at the Mccallum site (Figure 2). Documenting the history of this prominent archaeological site is important in and of itself. However, this history is also valuable because it provides insights into the development of archaeological practice in

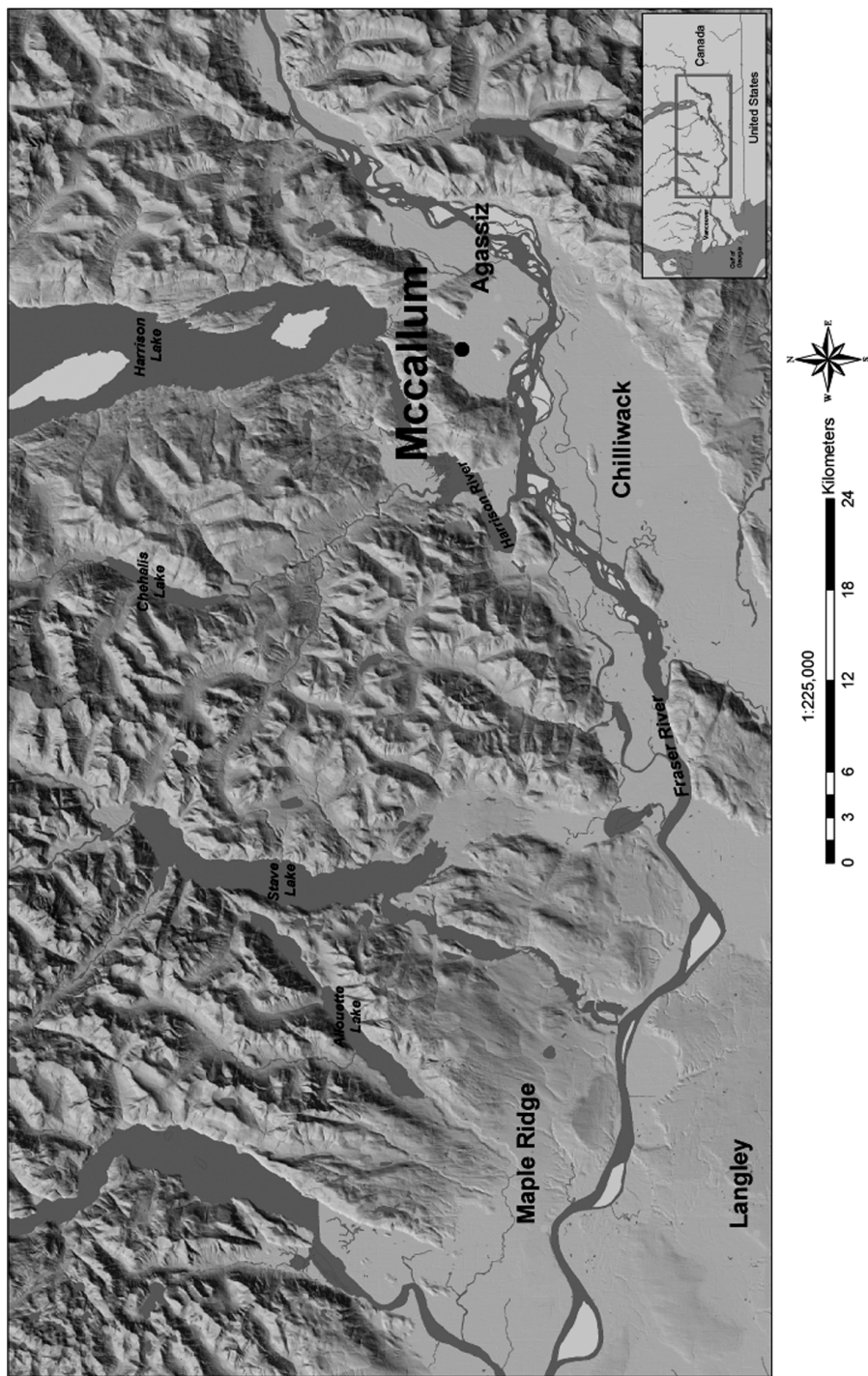


Figure 1. Location of the Mccallum site in the Fraser Valley.

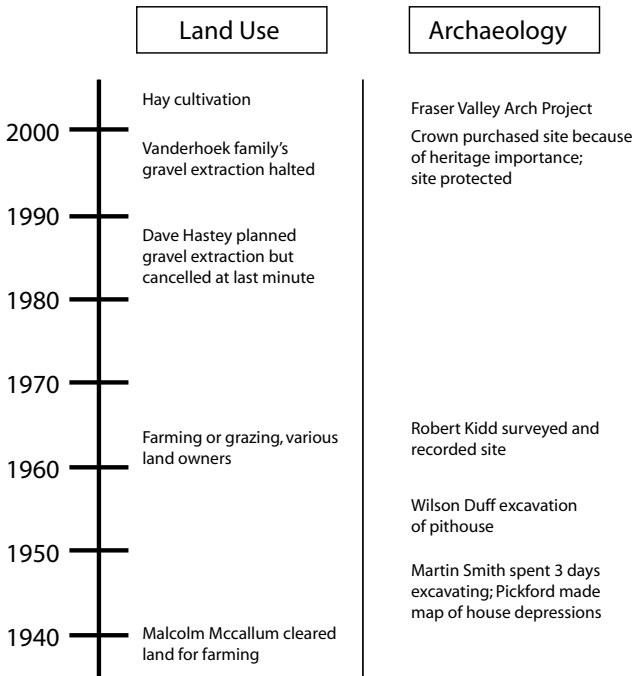


Figure 2. Time line of land use and archaeological investigations at the Mccallum site.

the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. In particular, this historical review provides one example of how changing social contexts influence interpretations of the archaeological record. At the Mccallum site, different investigators produced an evolving suite of knowledge that constituted the archaeological “truths” revisited and reassessed by each subsequent practitioner. I explore the context within which these truths were produced.

My second and related goal is to examine, in the context of my own recent work at the Mccallum site, how difficult it can sometimes be truly to integrate alternative (i.e., non-Western) ways of interpreting the past within an academic context. As an academic archaeologist who has conducted archaeology in the Fraser Valley since 1995, my research projects have enjoyed some degree of collaboration with local First Nations communities as well as with the larger Stó:lō political entity. I have received considerable guidance into the culturally appropriate way to “do archaeology” and have been protected from spiritual harm that might arise from working in places where the ancestors dwell. In most projects it has been easy to accommodate Stó:lō views of the

past alongside my own perspectives. At the Mccallum site, however, I was faced with how strongly I am influenced by my Western scientific paradigm and the ideas of my scientific predecessors. This challenged me to examine what it really means to recognize different ways of knowing the past and, further, how best to integrate Western scientific perspectives with other perspectives on the past.

In my review of the Mccallum site history, I situate the goals, methods, and outcomes of each successive archaeologist within the paradigms and social contexts in which he or she practised. This history ends when our team came to question certain longstanding “truths” about the site’s interpretation. Like our predecessors, our work was also influenced by the milieu in which we practised – in particular our interactions with local Stó:lō and Euro-Canadian communities. I finish with a discussion of the complexity of the research contexts in which academic archaeologists presently work. It is my view that we must hear and address all stakeholder concerns about the research process, and this requires a considerable amount of time, energy, and commitment. Such practices may seem far distant from the scientific archaeology of decades past, but it is the context in which we practise archaeology in British Columbia in the early twenty-first century.

FINDING HOUSES:

MARIAN SMITH’S EXCAVATION (1945)

The Context

Marian Smith was the first of the academic archaeologists to identify the Mccallum site as a place of heritage interest. In 1945, Smith was an instructor in the Department of Anthropology at Columbia University. Her research at the time was focused on Coast Salish First Nations of the Fraser and Puget Sound regions, including a specific interest in house forms (Smith 1940, 1941, 1950a). Four students participating in the Columbia University Summer Field Session assisted Smith in her archaeological investigation of the Mccallum site. Among these students were Helen Codere and Eleanor Leacock, both of whom went on to become influential anthropologists.

Smith’s brief archaeological excavations at the Mccallum site (Smith 1947) were clearly motivated by, and secondary to, her ethnographic research interests in Coast Salish houses. Smith only allotted three days for the Mccallum excavations. In fact, it is unclear how much archaeological experience she had (or where she had gained any such experience) prior

to her work at the Mccallum site (cf. de Laguna 1962). As a student of Boas, Smith believed that the study of anthropology should integrate all subdisciplines (de Laguna 1962) – and thus it was appropriate that her research on Coast Salish houses include both archaeological and ethnographic data. However, the speed with which Smith excavated the Mccallum deposits suggests that she did not recognize the methodological rigour needed to recover archaeological data – despite the fact such rigorous standards were practised by other North American academic archaeologists of the time (e.g., Sir Mortimer Wheeler in India, Gordon R. Willey in Peru).

Smith chose the Mccallum site (which she spelled “McClallum”) for excavation because one of her students became aware of a relatively large collection of artifacts held by James Mccallum, the landowner (Smith 1950b). Local First Nations do not seem to have been involved either in site selection or in Smith’s excavations. She did, however, ask her informants from the neighbouring Seabird Reserve if they had any information about the Mccallum site (Smith 1947, 1950b). They did not, but this is perhaps not surprising since members of Seabird Island originally come from upriver villages. Smith’s excavations at the Mccallum site, it seems, had the full support of the Mccallum family. She acknowledges that the family’s “interest and detailed knowledge proved invaluable” (Smith 1947 n25).

What She Found

Despite the fact that the majority of the artifacts recovered by the Mccallum family came from the slough below the terrace,¹ Smith was most interested in pursuing work on the terrace itself. Malcolm Mccallum,

¹ The collection that brought Smith to the Mccallum site was started by Malcolm Mccallum and completed by his son James Mccallum (Smith 1950b, v). While working at the site, A.E. Pickford, then the “Assistant in Anthropology” at the BC Provincial Museum in Victoria, convinced James Mccallum to donate his artifact collection to that institution. He also later arranged for the collection to be shipped to Smith, who was then at Columbia University, for analysis. Smith, influenced by the archaeological goals of the time, was interested in conducting typological analyses of the collection and comparing this assemblage to others in the region (Smith 1950b). Of the collection, Smith (1950b, 16) says the following:

The collection consists of about a hundred items including 24 bone pieces, some bone and antler fragments, a tooth fragment, a few tubular clay beads one to two inches long, and 63 stone specimens. The level of workmanship is very high indeed, although all the pieces were not made with equal care. Most spectacular are slim, finely chipped blades, some six or seven inches long, which it seems natural to call daggers. Of equal interest are fine polished stone ulos, some four inches long and as thin throughout as light cardboard. Both chipped and polished stone pieces occur in a number of forms. Nine flint thumb-nail scrapers of the same form (with fracture

James's father, had converted the terrace to farmland in the early part of the twentieth century by engaging in the extensive burning of vegetation and levelling of land (Duff 1949, 10; Smith 1947, 259-60).² Several depressions of various shapes and sizes were visible on the surface of the cleared field, and Smith surmised that they were the remains of circular pithouses and rectangular plank houses associated with an ancient village. Since Smith was already interested in house forms of the Coast Salish – in particular the association between pithouses and plank houses in the region – the discovery of these ancient house remains must have seemed quite fortuitous.

Smith focused her excavation on the “most clearly defined” of the rectangular surface depressions, which, she assumed, was the remains of a large plank house. Contrary to the dominant excavation goals of the early twentieth century (Trigger 1989), Smith's interest in house forms meant that she was not interested in excavating deep units in order to produce artifacts for cultural historical reconstructions; instead, she attempted broader scale excavations in order to produce structural remains – something that archaeologists interested in household archaeology

on one side, oval tending toward triangular) are of the only type which is exactly duplicated among more than three or four specimens. Most pieces are unique.

Smith apparently sent the collection back to the BC Provincial Museum because today, of the “about a hundred items,” fifty-three lithic artifacts are located there. No bone or antler artifacts are included, and it may be that they account for the missing forty-seven or so artifacts. In addition to these artifacts are six lithic artifacts – one collected by Wilson Duff while excavating the pithouse at the northern end of the site and another five donated by James McCallum within the context of Duff's visit. Based on stylistic attributes, many of the artifacts in the collection likely came from deposits dating to the last two thousand to three thousand years.

The proveniences of the artifacts are not precise and are sometimes confused. Their accession notes give only general farm provenience (Grant Keddie, pers. comm.). Based on Smith's published notes on the artifacts (Smith 1950b), most of the artifacts came from the ditching of the slough below the fields where she excavated. Smith provides details on the provenience on a few artifacts, making reference to the artifact numbers she attached before sending them to the museum. From the terrace specifically, she noted that one chipped point (actually a 17.5-cm biface) was found as well as four ground points “found in one ‘set’ on the habitation site not far from the excavated house site” (Smith 1950b, 17). However, the artifact numbers she provides for these four points actually correspond to adze blades. Conversely, the numbers she attributes to five adze blades, reportedly from the slough below, are actually associated with ground slate knives (Grant Keddie, pers. comm.). Consequently, we cannot resolve whether it was the adze blades or the slate knives that were found on the terrace.

² Without conducting an extensive search through land titles (beginning with the most recent), it is difficult to determine when Malcolm McCallum purchased the land. John and Sara Douglas held the first Crown grant to the property beginning on 23 February 1893. On 23 March 1940, Malcolm and James McCallum received a Crown grant for the timber rights on the property, but, by that time, the former already owned the property (information on file, New Westminster Land Title Office). The surname is spelled “McCallum” on the timber Crown grant.

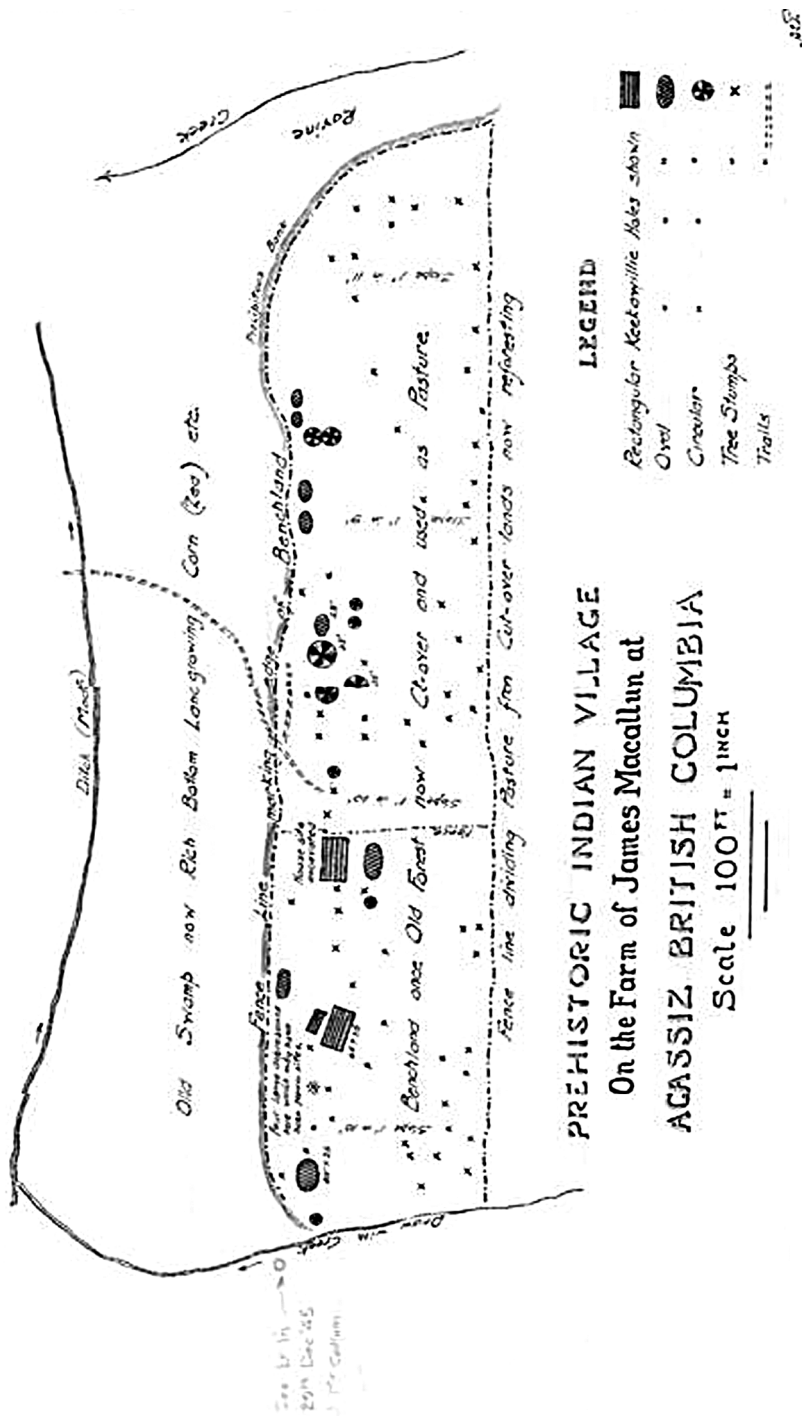


Figure 3. "Map of the McCallum Site" drawn by A.E. Pickford in 1945 for Marian Smith (used with permission from the Royal BC Museum).

do today. However, while her strategy was generally appropriate, her desire to see house remains may have influenced her interpretations of the data – a point to which I return later. Despite her very brief stay at the Mccallum site, Smith published two articles largely based on the Mccallum data (Smith 1947, 1950b).

In addition to the excavation crew, A.E. Pickford of the BC Provincial Museum joined Smith's team. In the course of three days, Pickford made a detailed map of depressions visible on the surface of Mccallum's field (Figure 3). This map, and the "truth" that it conveyed, played a significant role in archaeologists' subsequent interpretations of the Mccallum site.

In the short time allotted for excavations at the site, Smith and her students removed a considerable amount of dirt. Smith reports that she and her team excavated with "borrowed trowels and shovels" and, given limited time, did not "attempt complete excavation" (Smith 1947, 261). In total, the team excavated a unit (no size given) in the centre of the rectangular depression, another (approx. 1 x 1 m?) in the southwest corner, and a trench (approx. 1 x 10 m) located approximately one-third of the way in from the north end of the depression. Notes from the excavation seem to be limited to those published in her 1947 *American Antiquity* article on house types of the Fraser Region (Smith 1947). No other notes are located in the BC Provincial Museum, at the University of Columbia, or at the British Museum in London, which houses Smith's ethnographic fieldnotes from 1945. Unfortunately, the details presented in the published article are often either imprecise or difficult to follow.

Smith's excavations produced little in the way of definitive archaeological remains. The unit in the centre of the depression contained only glacial till, and the trench revealed ash and charcoal, which she interpreted as originating from when the Mccallums cleared the forest to create farmland. A small number of artifacts were recovered from the trench; none can be assigned to a particular time frame.

The second unit provided Smith with her most exciting results. Here she found charred and uncharred wood in various states of decay, which she interpreted to be "the overlapping boards of a former board surface" from "either the wall or the fallen roof boards" (Smith 1947, 262, 264), and one square or round post. Based on these two finds, she concluded that she had uncovered a plank house dating to the early historic period ("built in the first quarter of the nineteenth century"; Smith 1947, 264). Smith later used rich ethnographic details of Coast Salish houses, in combination with her excavation results, to provide a detailed reconstruction of this feature.

Although Smith's reconstruction of an early historic plank house are highly compelling at first read, scrutiny of her excavation results does not allow for independent evaluation of her findings. The discussion of methods and findings are very confusing, and the profiles and plans cannot be interpreted. Her conclusions about the existence of the structure are based on the presence of a surface depression and the supposed structural planks and posts. However, the combination of extensive deposition of burned trees associated with land clearing and the speed with which the deposits were excavated increases the likelihood that she misinterpreted them.

CONFIRMING HOUSES?

WILSON DUFF'S SURVEY (1949)

The Context

Four years after Smith, Wilson Duff conducted a short stint of work at the Mccallum site (which he spelled "Macallum") as part of his archaeological survey from Hope to Chilliwack (Duff 1949; Figure 4). Duff was then a graduate student in anthropology at the University of Washington. He was hired by the BC Provincial Museum as a summer field assistant to locate and describe sites and to dig test pits to determine which sites warranted further research (Duff 1949, 1). Like Smith, Duff had had little prior archaeological experience; his only field experience before the 1949 survey was on the coast (Borden 1981).

Duff's attraction to archaeology, like Smith's, seems to have been through his primary interest in ethnography. The survey, it seems, was the launching point for his subsequent ethnographic study of the Upper Stó:lō (Duff 1952) as well as his involvement in the archaeology and anthropology of British Columbia (Ames 1981; Borden 1981).³

³ Duff returned to the BC Provincial Museum in the summer of the following year to extend his survey east to Spuzzum and west to Chilliwack. Although he visited some archaeological sites and private collectors during that summer, his work was mostly ethnological (Grant Keddie, pers. comm.). In that same year, he was hired as the curator of anthropology, the position that Pickford held until 1948.

Also in 1950, Wilson conducted ethnographic work among the Songhees and wrote an overview of the state of archaeology in British Columbia. This information was to be used as a basis for requests for new legislation to protect archaeological sites and, where possible, to provide funds for the investigation of areas threatened with flooding (prompted by the huge 1948 flood). Before the end of the year, Wilson completed plans (with the British Columbia Archives and the University of British Columbia) to begin an archaeological survey of the province. A site form was sent out the next year to people all over the province to encourage them to record known sites in their area. This is why many earlier recorded sites were not visited by an archaeologist until years after they were recorded (Grant Keddie, pers. comm., 2005).



Figure 4. 1949 photograph of Wilson Duff, standing in a depression at the McCallum site, looking north (used with permission from the Royal BC Museum).

Despite Duff's interest in anthropology, however, there was little direct connection between his ethnographic interests and the archaeological investigations. Duff's fieldwork at the McCallum site, like Smith's, seems to have had the full support of the McCallum family.

Smith's previous work at McCallum, including Pickford's map, likely influenced Duff's understanding of the site. Based on Smith's (1947) publication, Duff noted that it appeared "to be somewhat older than other sites examined [and] is a site of more than usual interest" (Duff 1949, 9). It is unclear how Duff drew this assessment of the site's age, particularly since Smith (1947, 26) posited that the excavated house dated to the early nineteenth century. It is also unclear why he thought it was of particular interest. His comments are especially perplexing since, by the time Duff's regional survey took him to the McCallum site, he had seen quite a few housepit depressions.

What He Found

It is not specified how much time Duff spent at the site, but since the entire regional survey was completed in three and one-half weeks, it probably was no more than a day or two. In that time, Duff excavated two test pits, although their exact locations are unknown. He dug

the first unit (of unknown size) “in the centre of the second large rectangular house pit [of Pickford’s map] to see how seriously it had been disturbed [by ploughing]” (Duff 1949, 10). His excavation revealed a 15 cm A-horizon (the topsoil layer), overlying 5 cm of ash, which, in turn, overlay sterile glacial till. From this test, he concluded that “probably all the pits are just as seriously disturbed, and would not repay further work.” He reported no artifacts or features, and their absence (in contrast with Smith’s findings) seems to have led him to conclude that the deposits were thoroughly disturbed. Duff’s statement about the extensive disturbance of the deposits is at odds with his assessment that the site had “unusual interest.”

The second unit was placed in a depression (approximately 7 m diameter and 1 m deep) discovered by Mr. Mccallum in uncleared land to the north of the map Pickford made for Marian Smith. Duff (1949, 11) describes finding “a floor layer” six inches below ground surface and a ground slate projectile point in the rim of the feature, but he does not mention artifacts coming from the excavation. Based on his description, the point probably dates to no later than 3500 BP. Duff provides no details on the characteristics of the pithouse floor, and thus it is impossible to evaluate the efficacy of his interpretation.

Despite the fact that Duff excavated two units at the Mccallum site, his investigation added little to, and in fact further confused, our knowledge about the archaeology of the site. The results of his excavation are limited to two descriptive paragraphs in the unpublished report of the survey (Duff 1949). At the time, it was not required to record notes about “test excavations” (i.e., location, stratigraphic descriptions, artifacts recovered), and thus Duff’s interpretations, like Marian Smith’s, cannot be evaluated further.

FROM HOUSEPITS TO
COBBLE CHOPPERS:
ROBERT KIDD’S SURVEY (1963)

The Context

Thirteen years after Duff, Robert Kidd made a brief visit to the Mccallum site as part of a three-month archaeological survey of the Fraser Valley. The project was sponsored by the National Museum of Canada but was overseen by Charles Borden at the University of British Columbia (Kidd 1968). At the time, Kidd was in the midst of completing his master’s thesis from the University of Washington on early sites,

and he was keenly interested in testing hypotheses about the association between early sites and specific landforms (Kidd 1968, 210–11). Kidd grew up in Victoria and by 1963 had already gained considerable experience in BC archaeology (David Sanger, pers. comm., 2005). His careful observations of the McCallum site confirm this.⁴ The overarching goal of the survey was to locate new sites that would fill in the spatial and temporal gaps in the archaeology of the Fraser Valley.

Given that Smith's published findings suggest the McCallum site was historic in age, it is not clear why Kidd chose to investigate it. However, in 1958 he and Don Abbott collected one cobble chopper from the terrace (BC Archaeology site form), which undoubtedly enticed him to return to the McCallum site.⁵

Kidd's archaeological work at the McCallum site seems to have had little or nothing to do with local First Nations. Further, unlike the previous archaeological investigations, his contact with then landowner Mrs. Dyck may have been solely to get permission to walk the property. Kidd does note that Mrs. Dyck did not want the site to be excavated (BC Archaeology site form). He also notes that there was considerable surface disturbance at the site at the time he visited, presumably from continuous ploughing and cultivating.

What He Found

Little is known of Kidd's visit to the McCallum site. The only mention of the site in his published survey results is a dot on the map denoting its location (Kidd 1968). Based on the artifact catalogue at the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology (accessioned under the name "McCallum"), Kidd surface collected nearly forty artifacts, most of which were from an area "to the south and west of the housepit locality" (DhRk-2 artifact catalogue, Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia). At least one artifact was collected from as far as 0.5 km to the west, presumably from the same landform as the mapped

⁴ Grant Keddie (pers. comm. 2005) of the Royal British Columbia Museum writes, "Robert Kidd was an instructor at the Canadian Services College at Royal Roads in 1959 and already had some previous training in archaeology. He collaborated (as a volunteer) with this museum in documenting a large number of sites in the greater Victoria area. He filled out a standard site form of his own and took photographs of most of the sites. The survey forms were turned over to the Royal British Columbia Museum."

⁵ Cobble choppers (also sometimes called pebble tools) are hand-held tools made of river cobbles that have had a few large flakes removed from one end. As the name implies, they were often used for chopping wood. On the Northwest Coast, cobble choppers appear early in the archaeological sequence and continue in small numbers at sites dating at least as late as twenty-four thousand years ago (e.g., Hanson 1973).

portion of the site. The artifacts were largely cobble choppers but also included flakes, cores, and scrapers.⁶

The abundance of choppers, in combination with surface depressions, led Kidd to describe the site as a “chopper site” and a “housepit site” on the Provincial Archaeology site form. Kidd would have interpreted the choppers to mean that the Mccallum site was an early occupation (Haley 1987, 1996), so it is surprising that he did not describe it in his published report.⁷ There is no indication whether Kidd ever scrutinized Smith’s or Duff’s prior interpretations of Mccallum. After visiting the site, he formally registered it with the Provincial Archaeology Branch, where it received its official designation: DhRk-2.

REVISITING MCCALLUM CULTURE HISTORY:
THE FRASER VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGY
PROJECT (2002, 2004)

2002 Investigations: Context

The Mccallum site witnessed no further archaeological work or major shifts in land use until some thirty years after Kidd’s survey.⁸ In 1999, the Vanderhoek family, the current owners of the Mccallum terrace, applied for and received municipal permits to remove the terrace for gravel extraction. The family had no idea there was a registered archaeological site on its property. After one day of gravel extraction, members of the nearby Cheam Indian Band identified the gravel operation as a threat to the integrity of the site. The subsequent intervention of Stó:lō Nation, the provincial Archaeology Branch, and the RCMP resulted in the gravel operation’s being halted to allow for an archaeological assessment (Lepofsky et al. 2003; Schaepe 2000).

⁶ Flakes are the chips of stone removed from “cores” either to be used directly as a sharp-edged tool, to be modified further to make a more finished tool, or to be discarded as a by-product of tool manufacture. Scrapers are used for scraping (hides, plant materials).

⁷ David Sanger (pers. comm., 2005) notes that surveys at that time “tended to be limited (to go along with the limited time and money available) and targeted, rather than aimed at management of resources.” The omission of the Mccallum site (and others) from the report may have been financially motivated.

⁸ In the late 1980s, Dave Hastey, an Agassiz community member, applied for and received approval to extract gravel from the terrace and arranged a lease with the then-current land-owners. The plans were cancelled at the last minute, simply because Mr. Hastey was overly busy in other aspects of his work life (Dave Hastey, pers. comm., 2004). Given the somewhat lax enforcement of the heritage preservation law in the 1980s (when many archaeological sites were destroyed in favour of development), had the gravel operation gone ahead, the site would have been completely destroyed.

Archaeologists from Stó:lō Nation, the province, and the local academic and consulting archaeological communities assessed the site as being intact and of high cultural significance, in large part because of the archaeological finds reported by Marian Smith. Stó:lō oral history also suggests that the site is a good candidate for the late period village named Tsitsqem (“fine slivers of the Douglas-fir [bark]” or “hazelnut [pod]”) (McHalsie 2001). This village was abandoned after the 1792 smallpox epidemic, when occupants dispersed and moved in with relatives at the villages of Shxw’ow’hamel and Popkum (Carlson 2001, 2003; Schaepe 2001a, 2001b). Based on these assessments, the Crown purchased the land in April of 2001, citing “archaeological and heritage importance” (Land Use Report, Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management, file no. 2408137). This status protects the site from further destruction by limiting future activities to those “deemed compatible with or ancillary to ... its archaeological and heritage purposes for so long as required” (Memorandum, BC Assets and Land Corp., 20 September 2002).

Preservation of the McCallum site resulted in mixed reactions from the several interested communities. For Stó:lō communities, preservation of the site was the only appropriate and duly “respectful” action. Some non-Aboriginal community members in Agassiz, however, saw it as another example of archaeology standing in the way of local development. Since it was not widely known that the land was actually purchased from the landowner, and since the amount was never made public, many perceived that the landowner had been treated unfairly in the process (pers. comm. Agassiz community members). For archaeologists, the preservation of the site presented the potential for future archaeological investigations.

2002 Investigations: What We Found

My archaeological work at the McCallum site was part of the Fraser Valley Archaeology Project (FVAP), a collaboration between researchers at several universities and Stó:lō Nation. The focus of the project was the investigation of Stó:lō houses and settlements throughout the central and upper Fraser Valley (Lepofsky et al. 2003). We chose to include the McCallum site in our larger research program because, as a prime candidate for the late period village named Tsitsqem (McHalsie 2001), it fit our criteria of a village site that could be connected to oral traditions. Smith’s interpretation of McCallum as a late period village supports this supposition.

Our team spent three days at the site in the summer of 2002, reclearing 140 m of the road-cut profile and surveying the area around the terrace



Figure 5. Looking south at the McCallum terrace and the road-cut profile with the “U-shaped depressions.”



Figure 6. Close-up of one of the “U-shaped depressions” in the road cut. Each increment on the scale is 25 cm.

(Figure 5). Our survey relocated several burial mounds on the perimeter of the terrace that had been previously noted during an impact assessment in 2000 and that were similar in appearance to those found at other sites in the region (e.g., Lepofsky et al. 2000). Clearing the profile revealed a series of U-shaped depressions that we thought were house depressions (housepits; Figure 6). We collected radiocarbon samples from charcoal lenses associated with these depressions, which we interpreted to be the remains of burned roofs and floors. Our research team initially believed that these features corresponded to some of the structures on Smith's map. However, two of the three radiocarbon results were inconsistent with a late period village (90 +/- 40 BP, Beta - 183292; 4190 +/- 40, BP Beta - 183293; 9820 +/- 40 BP Beta 183294), so we surmised that at least some of the features represented much earlier occupations.

Our clearing of the road cut exposed a few artifacts. We could not infer the age of the artifacts, with the exception of a few cores and cobble choppers (Lepofsky et al. 2003), although a triangular stemmed point that was recorded on the site in 2000 (Schaepe pers. comm. 2005) gave some indication of late prehistoric use. None of the artifacts were historic in age, and the choppers were more consistent with an early- to mid-Holocene-aged site (eight thousand to three thousand years ago).

2004 Investigations: Context

The archaeological investigation in the summer of 2004 was one of the first major excavations undertaken in our large research project. The excavation was conducted in conjunction with the Simon Fraser University archaeological field school, which I was teaching. The data recovered were intended to provide the basis of the PhD dissertation of Mike Lenert, a UCLA graduate student. Lenert and I co-directed the 2004 investigations. On our crew were two First Nations community members: Deanna Peters from Shxw'ow'hamel First Nation and Denise Douglas from Cheam First Nation.

By the time we launched our excavation in the summer of 2004, we had developed several "truths" about the McCallum site's history drawn from the work of Pickford, Smith, and Duff. Based on the radiocarbon dates of the depressions in the road cut, we believed there were multiple housepit occupations spanning the Holocene period. The most recent occupation of what we were calling the village of Tsítsqem was represented by the (ostensibly) pristine remains recorded by Smith and Pickford on the terrace and by our youngest radiocarbon date. Smith's interpretations were so compelling, however, that we failed to note that

the overwhelming majority of artifacts collected from the terrace were much more consistent with an occupation dating to several thousand years old and that the majority of later artifacts were recovered from the slough below the terrace, not the terrace itself.

As with all our work in the Fraser Valley, our excavations were guided by Stó:lō protocols for conducting our work respectfully and safely (Stó:lō Nation 2003). Our field season began with a “burning” at the Mccallum site. Burnings are age-old ceremonies in which a ritual leader communicates with the ancestors on behalf of the living community. Spiritual leader Steven Point of Skowkale First Nation told us after the burning that many ancestors dwelled at the Mccallum site and, further, that they were pleased we were working there.

The excavation project at the Mccallum site included an extensive community outreach program, arranged in conjunction with Stó:lō Nation. The program was run by Yvette John, a community member of Chawathil First Nation, located near Hope, and Amanda King, a graduate student at Simon Fraser University. Our goal was to reach both the non-Aboriginal and First Nations communities, and, to this end, we advertised in numerous venues (local radio, local newspapers, Stó:lō Nation’s newsletter and local First Nation newsletters, talk shows). Site visitors were given an extensive tour that integrated both the Stó:lō and Western perspectives of archaeological heritage. They were treated to the singing and drumming of Halq’eméylem songs alongside an explanation of the excavation (e.g., details of burned layers in the ground and the daily haul of artifacts). By the end of the summer, over seven hundred people had visited the site, including members, chiefs, and elders from a number of Stó:lō communities, representatives of the Provincial Government involved in protection of the site, and members of the non-Aboriginal community, including the previous landowners. Many visitors came to the site multiple times.

Throughout the summer, Stó:lō visitors to the excavation affirmed their strong connection to the ancestors living at the Mccallum site. Several community members who visited the site (including children) saw/felt the presence of the ancestors, and one elder from Seabird Island left an elaborate offering of traditional foods to the ancestors. While keenly interested in our scientific findings, the connection to the site for many Stó:lō was also very personal. My daily interaction with the site, and that of most of my students, however, was more narrowly focused on the excavating and sifting of dirt, the recording of notes, and the cleaning of artifacts.

*2004 Investigations:
What We Found (and Didn't Find)*

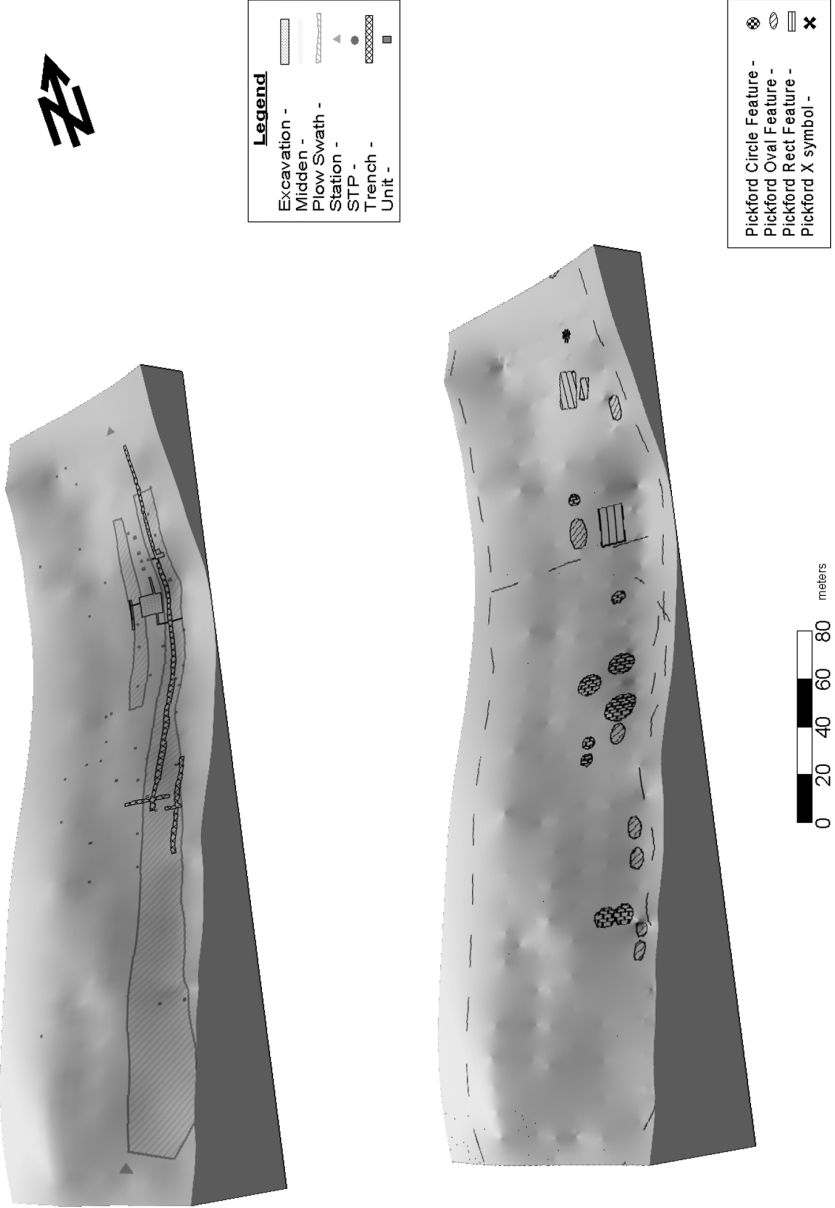
We had two goals for our archaeological investigations in 2004. Our primary goal was to locate and expose the house that Smith had partially excavated; our secondary goal was to compare this rectangular structure with one of the round ones she had recorded at the south end of the site (Figure 3). With Pickford's map and Smith's publications in hand, we attempted to relocate Smith's excavation. We did this by first relocating on the terrace surface what we thought were the depressions depicted on the map. Though the edges of the depressions appeared to be somewhat obscured from ploughing, we believed that we were able to recognize some of the features recorded by Pickford. Then, using GPS points and relocating features depicted on Pickford's map (the fence and old tree line), we superimposed Pickford's map on a map of the surface of the terrace today (Figure 7). Finally, we ploughed large swaths of the terrace to locate concentrations of artifacts associated with the supposed structures (Figure 7). By pinpointing what we thought were the boundaries of the depression in which Smith worked, we believed it would be an easy task to locate her excavation units.

To our dismay, finding Smith's excavations proved much harder than we could have imagined. After several weeks of opening up contiguous 2 x 2 m units in "Smith's house," we had located neither evidence of her previous excavations nor the house remains themselves. This was despite the fact that we excavated a large area that should have encompassed the area in which Smith and her team worked (Figure 7). We found no historic artifacts or any artifacts consistent with a large, permanent settlement; rather, the artifact assemblage was dominated by large flakes, cores, and choppers. The plough swaths revealed the same mix and density of artifacts.

Although all evidence seemed to weigh against there being an intact late period village at McCallum, it took us several weeks to actually reject the archaeological "truths" that we had drawn particularly from Smith's work. We came to some painfully obvious conclusions. First, neither our large area excavation nor the numerous small test units we dug near it (Figure 7) revealed any archaeological deposits that were not heavily disturbed by ploughing. Second, the collection of artifacts we did recover was overwhelmingly early- to mid-Holocene in age. Third, when we re-examined the road cut with more skeptical eyes, we could see that the shape of the depressions were more consistent with natural features (channels?) than pithouse floors (Figure 6) and that we had

Figure 7. Top: Perspective view of the surface of the Mccallum terrace with our plough swaths, test units, backhoe trench, and excavation units. The 5000- to 6,000-year-old archaeological deposits were found along the middle and northern end of the backhoe trench. Our excavation at the northern end revealed the remains of a small structure.

Bottom: A simplified version of Pickford's map that was geo-referenced and placed on a perspective view of the Mccallum terrace. Note that our plough swaths and backhoe trench should have cut through the supposed structures mapped by Pickford, and our block excavation should have been located in the supposed square structure where Smith excavated.



actually dated the burning of roots that had grown along the inside of the depressions. The early Holocene date on one of these burns suggests that these natural features probably date to the initial formation of the terrace, some 10,500 years ago (John Clague, pers. comm.). Ploughing in the last century likely obscured the surface expression of these features, but it is easy to imagine that they could have appeared as historic house depressions in the 1950s, when Pickford and Smith visited the terrace.

As project director, my reaction to these realizations was one of increasing anxiety. I was concerned that our inability to find “pristine” archaeological deposits (of any age) both compromised the archaeological education of the undergraduate students and negated the proposed dissertation research. More important, I was concerned that, based on scientific criteria, the site was not worthy of being protected. What would we say to the many visitors to the site? To the Stó:lō community? To provincial representatives involved in protecting the site? Or to the members of the non-Aboriginal local community, who were coming around to having us excavate in what could have been a lucrative gravel operation? Our outreach team continued to focus on the importance of the site to Stó:lō heritage and on our excavation strategy rather than on what we were (not) finding. All the visitors seemed delighted with what they saw, and none seemed to share my angst about our lack of “significant” findings. Clearly, despite the words of Steven Point in the pre-excavation burning, I had not fully internalized the fact that there were other equally important (non-scientific) interpretations of the site.

In the end, we did uncover archaeologically significant results, though they were vastly different from our original expectations and previous interpretations of the site. Our numerous shovel tests of the surface of the terrace (STPS, Figure 7), combined with a backhoe trench, exposed two areas below the plough zone with intact stratified deposits (Figure 7). Our excavation of these areas revealed 5,000- to 6,000-year-old seasonal encampments in which people harvested and worked wood and also performed a variety of subsistence-related activities (Lepofsky and Lenert 2004). These findings are scientifically significant because sites dating to this time frame are rare in the Fraser Valley (and on the Northwest Coast as a whole), as are well-dated, stratified sites with cobble chopper tools (of any age). Furthermore, our extensive excavation and careful data collection strategy allowed us to gather a range of information (on plant and animal resources, timing of occupation, etc.) not often compiled from such early sites. We never found evidence of a late prehistoric settlement, but by the end of the field season I felt that the site did indeed have scientific merit and that it offered a story worth telling.

MULTIPLE CONTEXTS.
MULTIPLE INTERPRETATIONS

For well over half a century, the Mccallum site has been viewed differently by the many people who have had an interest in it. Among archaeologists, the interpretations and treatment of the site shifted with the changing interests of the researchers (which, in turn, were influenced by their social and professional milieux). The Mccallum archaeological story began with Marian Smith and her interest in Coast Salish house forms. Smith's interpretations, and the weight that they carried because they were published in a leading archaeological academic journal, influenced all subsequent investigators of the site. In our work, our reliance on her interpretations of key features caused us to take a rather circuitous route to "seeing" and understanding what the archaeology was revealing to us.

In many ways, the history of archaeological investigations at the Mccallum site provides insights into the shifting historical context of BC archaeological practice. Smith's and Duff's interactions with the site were typical of many early archaeological investigations in the province. These researchers, like Charles Hill-Tout many years before them, were anthropologists with little or no archaeological training. In Smith's case, First Nations perspectives of the past motivated the archaeological work, and her extensive ethnographic interviews about house forms probably influenced her interpretations. To our knowledge, however, neither Duff nor Smith directly involved First Nations individuals in the archaeological fieldwork. With the notable exception of Charles Borden's work with the Musqueam community (Bryan 1980), this was typical of archaeological practice in the mid-twentieth century in the Lower Mainland.

Kidd's approach to the archaeology of the Mccallum site was also influenced by the current traditions within academic archaeology. In particular, his combination of hypothesis testing with explicit culture-historical objectives reflects the paradigm shift in archaeology from culture-history to "scientific archaeology" derived from logical-positivism (e.g., Binford 1962; Watson, LeBlanc, and Redman 1971). With Kidd's interest in ancient sites, and his positivist approach, it is not surprising that his project did not involve local First Nations. Until relatively recently (e.g., Budhwa 2002; Martindale and Marsden 2003; Martindale 1999, 2006), most BC archaeologists thought First Nations oral traditions were of little relevance to anything but the most recent archaeological record.

My research at the Mccallum site, like that of my predecessors, clearly reflects the current scientific and socio-political context of

archaeological practice in British Columbia. The McCallum site is one of an increasing number of archaeological sites in the province where issues of contemporary land use intersect with First Nations interests in their own heritage. Thus, while each of the previous archaeologists at the McCallum site worked with non-Aboriginal landowners and local First Nations to some degree, our project actively engaged with both of these communities. This was expressed in our ongoing collaboration with Stó:lō researchers, the participation of First Nations on our field crew, and our active outreach program.

Our archaeological inquiry at the McCallum site, however, like those of Smith, Duff, and Kidd, was firmly rooted in a Western scientific paradigm. We were strongly influenced by the scientific findings of our predecessors as well as by a Western model of what constitutes “proof” of heritage significance. Despite my active involvement with the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities at the McCallum site, I found it difficult to truly embrace and give equal importance to other (non-scientific) ways of experiencing the past.

In my experience, most Stó:lō do not share this same dissonance: the McCallum site can have many meanings that exist alongside the scientific archaeology. The site is a place where the ancestors dwell, where oral history is situated, where knowledge is held, where “things” are curated, and so on (Stó:lō Nation 2003). At the same time, the Stó:lō are also very interested in the science of the archaeological endeavour. Stó:lō place significant value on scientific research, which is closely tied to the central principle of “knowing your history” (Schaepe, pers. comm. 2007). Science is seen within the Stó:lō community as a way of discovering and relating to the past. Additionally, scientific evidence is closely connected to the assertion of Aboriginal rights and title, which, in turn, is founded upon “sound science.” Because of this connection between ancestry and contemporary political rights, the relationship of Stó:lō individuals to science is often meaningful in ways that the relationship of the non-Aboriginal public to science is not. Thus, while Stó:lō shared my excitement about the discovery of the ancient settlement, for them the site did not move from a place of little value to something now legitimately important, as it did for me. For the Stó:lō, the McCallum site was already significant, and the new scientific discoveries were easily integrated with the other meanings that the site evoked.

Not surprisingly, many of the non-Aboriginal visitors to the McCallum site had yet another kind of connection to the archaeological record. The outreach coordinators toured hundreds of people through the site

– people who observed and experienced the “feeling” of being on a dig. They were directed to aspects of our methods, shown our daily collection of artifacts, and presented elements of Stó:lō oral histories pertaining to the site. The absence of stratigraphy or intact features mattered little to this group’s experience of the place; instead, it was the archaeological *process* that was most intriguing. How is it that we were able to “read” the sediments the way we did? What methods did we use to do this? To many non-Aboriginal community members, the site is a place where science happens, and that process is more intrinsically important than are the interpretations that we as archaeologists generate.

INTEGRATING MULTIPLE INTERPRETATIONS

The McCallum story, with its many twists and turns, provides a “Coles Notes” version of the history of archaeology in southern British Columbia. Two main historical trends emerge: first, the use of increasingly rigorous archaeological methods through time and, second, an increasing recognition on the part of archaeologists of the importance – indeed, of the ethnical soundness – of working with descendent and other local communities. In the case of the McCallum site, today’s more rigorous archaeological methods resulted in a complete reworking of the site’s interpretations. But the tale is not just one of good scientific practices trumping bad, as one reviewer suggested. It also illustrates a willingness to embrace a scientific interpretation of the past, even when it is faulty, and a reluctance to give equal importance to other interpretations. When archaeologists collaborate with descendent communities, however, we can be forced to face head on the fact that there are multiple ways of knowing British Columbia’s past, including ways that are non-scientific. While it is easy to accommodate these multiple views when they are complementary, it is more difficult to do so when they are not.

In British Columbia, academic archaeologists have always held a privileged place in archaeological practice. Our interest and knowledge of the past has opened doors to communities that other outsiders may not easily enjoy: our investigations of the past are not usually tied to some kind of development, our projects are often externally funded, and thus our intellectual and physical arena remains relatively unconstrained. While we often work closely with First Nations and are privileged to share in local perspectives, as outsiders we can avoid being embroiled in internal community politics. There is a huge potential for academics to conduct collaborative and consultative archaeological research with Aboriginal communities; indeed, all the major academic projects

currently being conducted in British Columbia significantly involve First Nations researchers and community members.⁹ There is also a huge opportunity, perhaps less realized, to incorporate the beliefs of descendant communities about their past into our assessments of what is archaeologically significant.

In general, most academic archaeologists spend less time reaching out to the non-Aboriginal communities in which they are working than to First Nations communities. There are several reasons why this might be so, including the fact that non-Aboriginal communities are larger, more dispersed, and, thus, can be harder to define and delimit than First Nations communities. Furthermore, archaeologists are generally more motivated to build relations with the communities whose heritage they are studying. Finally, it is increasingly common among BC First Nations to require archaeological researchers to go through a formal heritage approval and permitting process. This process, and the common requirement that researchers hire community members to be part of archaeological crews, further encourages active involvement with local First Nations communities.

While collaborative research with local First Nations and linkages to the non-Native community offer many opportunities, truly engaging with stakeholders of diverse heritages can sometimes present challenges for academic archaeologists. The privilege of external funding and autonomy comes at a cost: the requirement to produce “publishable results” (i.e., data and interpretations that are “relevant” to the current milieu of the discipline). This requirement also extends to finding “appropriate data” for archaeology students associated with the research project.

Clearly, balancing disparate views of heritage is not easily realized – if it were, issues concerning heritage management would have been resolved years ago by the many people who care passionately about heritage in this province.¹⁰ One thing is clear, however: we cannot resolve these issues without effective communication among all of the stakeholders with heritage concerns – First Nations, academic and con-

⁹ Examples are Quentin Mackie’s (University of Victoria) and Daryl Fedje’s (Parks Canada) research with the Haida in Haida Gwaii, Al McMillan’s and Denis St. Claire’s work with the Nuu-chah-nulth, Andrew Martindale’s research with the Tsimshian in the Skeena region and the Musqueam in Vancouver, Colin Grier and Eric McLay’s ongoing collaborations with the Hul’qumi’num First Nations in the Strait of Georgia, Mike Blake’s and my collaborative research in the Fraser Valley with Stó:lō Nation; and John Welch’s and my work on the Sunshine Coast with Tla’Amin First Nation.

¹⁰ Managing archaeological heritage is embedded in the more encompassing issue of interpretation, “ownership,” and management of all aspects of heritage. For a thoughtful and thorough review, see Brown (2003).

sulting archaeologists, and non-Aboriginal communities. Our diverse cultures and interests will always mean that there will be different interpretations of the archaeological record. Our first task is to understand that there are different voices and views on the past and that many of these have equal validity. It is here that academic archaeologists can make a significant contribution to the heritage arena. As a politically and economically privileged community, we are well situated to educate the public about the many views of heritage and to begin forging the lines of communication needed to address diverse heritage concerns.

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