

Yukon College

Anthropology 225

Field Methods in Subarctic Archaeology and Ethnography



2012 Fieldwork Summary

6 June – 9 August 2012

Norman Alexander Easton

Yukon College Whitehorse

Yukon Territory, Canada



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Norman Alexander Easton, Yukon College Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada

June 6

Course start. Student paperwork at Yukon College. First supply shopping.

Initial Field Crew consists of Mark Young, Research Assistant, UBC, Jordan Handley, Honours student, SFU, Michael Grooms, PhD student, University New Mexico, and students Kendra Vaughn, , University Pennsylvania, Alina Aquino, University California, Geoffery Homel, Simon Fraser University, Keith Saunders, University of Calgary, Rachelle Mathews, University of New Mexico, and Interns Laurianne Bourgenon, University Montreal, Anne Marie Lapointe, University Montreal, and Dianna Marion, of Mississauga, Ontario. More expected in weeks to come. Village assistants include Leslie Sam, Northway, and Chelsea, Tamika, and Eddie Johnny, Beaver Creek; Eldred Johnny is providing camp support (firewood and survey guide), and David and Ruth Johnny are providing mentoring in the *Dineh* Way.

June 7 – 8

Mapping and Total Station Workshops

June 9 – 10

Dry Goods, Equipment, Food shopping

Monday, 11 June

Depart Whitehorse; arrive Little John camp c. 10 pm. David Yesner on site. Evening visit by Yukon College staff tour led by Brian Buckman and Eldo Enns.

Tuesday, 12 June

Camp setup

Wednesday, 13 June

Begin excavations down below on West Lobe. David up above on cookshack microblade locus. Attend *Nelna*h School graduation and baseball game in Beaver Creek village.

S13W21 – Mark Young – completing unit from 2011



S17W21 – Jordan Handley – New Unit



S14W22 – New unit



S15W23 – New unit



S16W23 – New unit



N4W6 – completing unit from 2010

Units established and surface litter removed. Surface level mapped in unit books; photo. Excavation through A/B1, B2 for S13W21 and N4W6.

S13W21



All quads taken down to solid B2 surface; photo; flakes at top of B2.

S14W22

Circular feature along S of unit – humic fill within bowl-like depression. Wood remains in NW Q; mapped in level book and photo

S15W22

Wood plank fragment in NE and SE Q, large root in NW Q; mapped in level book and photo.

S16W23

Root in NW Q, articular small mammal bone, burned and calcined in SE Q; 2 flakes in B1

S17W21

Wood plank fragment and stake? In SE Q; cobble emerging in SW Q.

Thursday, 14 June

Continue excavations. Evening presentation on Zooarchaeology by David Yesner.

S13W21



All quads down to top of loess. Multiple flakes of basalt, grey chert, and obsidian) and charcoal sample (KdVo6-2012-01) in association recovered from B2.

S17W21



Fire-reddened soil and ash in B1 removed; 11 flakes recovered. Northern quads down to top of B2

S15W23

SW Q taken down to top of WR Ash; possible microblade recovered. NW Q taken down to top of B2 and large root removed.

S14W22



All Qs down to top of B2; basalt and chert flakes recovered.

S16W23



All Qs down to top of WR Ash. Historic wood Feature mapped and removed; no artifacts recovered.

N2W4

N Qs down to top of B2.

N2W5

N Qs down to top of B2.

Friday, 15 June

Presentation on Lithic Production and Recognition. Continued excavations. Crew into town to camp at Buckshot Betty's for evening. Work with Yesner on NSF proposal.

S16W23



First level (5cm) of B2 excavated in E Qs. 2 flakes and ochre in NE Q; multiple flakes in SE Q.

S15W23

Cobble spall and FAR in NW Q of Top of B2; SE Q exposed to top of B2.

S17W21



Entire Unit exposed to B2 surface; mapped and photo. S Qs exposed to first level of B2, recovering several flakes.

S14W22

SE and NE Qs exposed through first level of B2; multiple flakes, one vertically inclined. SW and NW Qs excavated to top of Loess.

S13W21

Excavated from Top of Loess two levels, 10 cm into the pebbly loess; no artifacts recovered.

N2W4



Excavated west of root to bottom of B2; flakes and microblades recovered. Excavate around root, recover broken distal biface fragment in the upper B2.

Saturday, 16 June

Crew day off in village. Work on fieldnotes, review upper Yukon river canyon manuscript, complete installation of solar power unit.

Sunday, 17 June

Continue excavations. Presentation on Beringian Archaeology.

S13W21



Continued excavation through to bottom of second Loess level at Loess minus 10 cm. End excavation in this unit. Begin profiles.

S14W22



Unit completed to bottom of B2 / Top of Loess.

S16W23



n.b. photo label (W22) is wrong – this is W23.

Unit excavated to mid-B2; recovered flakes and exposed FAR feature (#2012-04).

S15W23



KdVo6:3681



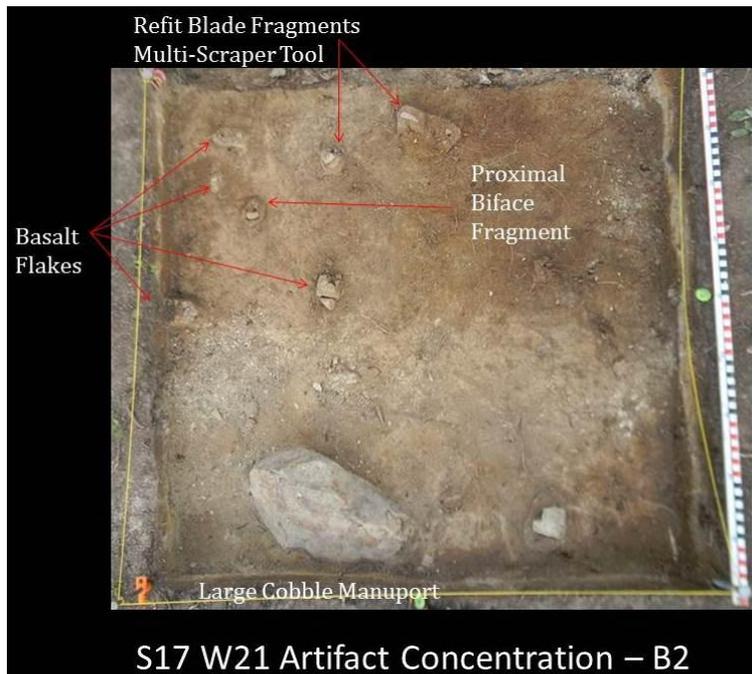
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Excavated through B2 level. Two side-notched points recovered in W Qs and flakes throughout.

S17W21





Excavated B2 through first level to 5 cm; exposed multiple basalt flakes, a proximal biface fragment, and broken multi-scraper made on a chert blade. B2 is quite shallow in the SW Q, with Loess level exposed.



KdVo6:3638

Monday, 18 June

Field trip to Shaw Creek sites and provisioning in Tok, AK. Lve 8:45 am, Rtn 11 pm.



Tuesday, 19 June

S14W22



Kendra and Rachelle start at top of Loess level; 1 basalt flake recovered. Completed first Loess level to 5 cm; photo.

S16W23



Keith and Dianna began at B2 minus 5 cm and completed B2 minus 10 cm. Recovered red ochre and 2 flakes. B2 present at - 10.

S15W23

Alina and Geoff continued excavation of B2 minus 5cm. Flake in SW Q. Excavated B2 minus 10 to top of Loess.

S17W21

Niki and Jordan finished unit though loess to frost shattered bedrock. Several flakes recovered from Loess and deeper B2 pocket. Two profiles to complete.

N2W4/N2W5



Mark completed excavation of the N Qs of this unit; recovered chert shatter. Profile and photo.

Wednesday, June 20

S15W23



Excavated to Loess – 10 cm, flake recovered. Continued excavation to Loess – 15 cm.

S14W22



Test pit backfill in central SQ. Excavated to Loess – 10; burned biface reduction flake with edge modification along the right margin recovered.

S16W23



Completed excavation to Loess – 5 cm.

S17W22



Profiles completed; photos. Unit completed.

Thursday 21 June



Yikahh Mann trail trek to check outcrop exposures and test. Depart 9 AM. Two tests were placed at the mouth of the lake on the northerly side in the deciduous grove and two tests were placed at the spruce grove to the west of the mouth. All were negative.



Climbed to outcrop at the head of the canyon, which proved to be schist. Placed four test pits along the ridge about the outcrop; all negative.



Depart 4 pm via canyon for planned 7 pm exit. KV has hard time of it – heat exhaustion and general fitness slows us to <.5 Km/hr and progress is slow, but all out safe and sound c. 11 pm.

Friday 22 June



All units completed to 10 – 15 cm into Loess. Profiles all day. Mike continued testing soil probe mechanics, while Mark and Jordan continued clearing Pit of Despair in East Lobe. Crew to village for dinner with Johnny's and overnight towards their day off.

N18W9



Exposed surface prior to cleaning.

N19W7



Exposed surface cleaned.

N19W8



Exposed surface cleaned.

N19W9



Exposed surface cleaned.

S14W22



Final surface at end of excavation and wall profile.

S15W23





Final surface at end of excavation and wall profile.

S16W23



Final surface at end of excavation and wall profiles.

Saturday 23 June

Day off for crew.

Meeting with Mike Grooms to transfer data and discuss field strategy for further collection of thesis data. Meeting with Jordan Handley to transfer data and discuss field strategy for same. Afternoon with JH to survey creek beds in region: Enger Lakes Moraine, Dry Creek 1, San Pete Creek, White River, Beaver Creek – all negative for potential lithic raw material sources.

Sunday 24 June

New units established today. Total Station set up to establish grid datums.

Crews and designated units consist of:

November – Niki, Keith, Dianna –microblade locus by cookshack

Juliet – Jordan, Geoff, Alina – B2 hearth feature in test pit from 2011, SW site Q.

Anthony – Mark, Kendra, Rachelle – Paleosol hearth feature? In test pit from 2011, NW site Q.

N3W8 / N3W9



November – Niki, Keith, Dianna –microblade locus by cookshack

New datum point set at the SE corner of N3W9. Keith and Diana excavating N3W8, Niki on N3W9. Removing O/A for remainder of day. Historic Molson’s Canadian beer bottle cap and leather strap with nail recovered.

n.b. Establishing these units with the TS reveals that what had previously been designated N4W5 and N4W6 should be designated N4W8 and N4 W9 – this will also effect the designations of nearby units previously excavated (N1-2-3/W9-10 and N3-4/W4-5-6).

S3W23 / S4W23

Juliet – Jordan, Geoff, Alina – B2 hearth feature in test pit from 2011, SW site Q.



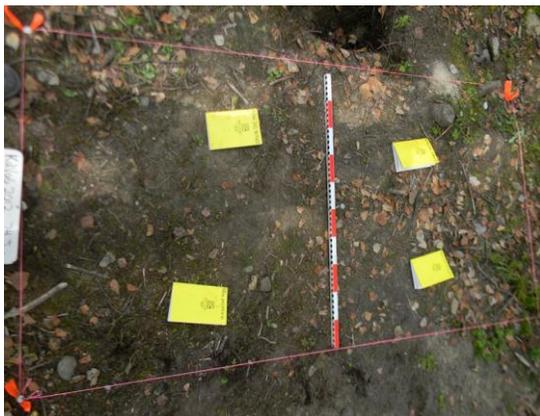


Removed root mat, which is thick here inside the forest. Excavated S4W23 to nearly top of B2. Ash layer is inconsistent due to roots and slope. Two flakes recovered from bottom B1 / top of Ash.

n.b. Establishing these units with the TS reveals that what had previously been designated S3-4/W18-19 excavated in 2007 by Rita Eagle should be redesignated closer to W 20-22, since this 4 unit quadrangle lies less than a meter northerly. We will shoot this in, along with most recent units in the West Lobe tomorrow.

N17W16 / N18W16

Anthony – Mark, Kendra, Rachelle – Paleosol hearth feature? In test pit from 2011, NW site Q.



Removed O level, which is quite thick here, c. 15 cm in NW and SW quads of adjacent units. No artifacts recovered.

S15W21



Mike continues soil sampling – ending day with insertion of sample tube for OSL dating at the interface of the B2 and Loess in the NE Q of Unit **S15W21**. Began excavation of this quadrant to obtain 3-d profile around sample tube. Mapped wood feature.



Johnny's arrive for dinner c. 7 pm. Evening of discussion with crew by David and Ruth on wide range of ethnographic topics, wrapping up at 11:45 pm.

Monday 25 June

Continue excavations in AM until arrival of David and Ruth Johnny for language seminar at 11 am on tea protocol and common associated words.

Thaay – Tea, *Tuu* – water, *Tuu Thaa* – soup, *Thaay ndée klàa* – do you want tea?, *Enuh* – no, Etc. – also discussion on respect in the bush, rules for *shoh*, language. This carries on until lunchtime which I prepare. Further excavation in the pm.

S3W23



Cleared root mat and took down NW and SE Qs to top of B1, with scattered ash appearing in places.

S4W23



Excavated entire unit to top of B2,; NW and SW Qs excavated further into the B2, exposing two charcoal concentrations and ash. Tin-foiled for potential sample. Several flakes recovered.

S15W21



Continued excavation to top of B2 and then continued into first level of B2. Microblade fragment and flakes recovered.



Removed samples from around OSL sample tube.

Tuesday 26 June

N3W8



Excavated to top of Ash level. One flake recovered. Very mixed throughout due to roots through unit that we are attempting to go around in order to save the tree as part of the cookhouse.

N3W9

Excavated to top of B1. Root disturbance is less severe in this adjacent unit.

N18W16 / N17W16



These adjacent units west of the main East lobe excavations are quite damp beneath a thick layer of sphagnum moss. The underlying O horizon is also thicker than encountered to date elsewhere on the site, consisting of a wet dark humic layer above loess, with a poorly developed, thin, and discontinuous B horizon. Towards the bottom of this "O" layer is found concentrations of pebbles and cobbles, apparently burned and greasy, as well as large pieces of orange hematite; all of these are being treated as manuports and recorded as a single Feature 2012-06 across both units. A Split Cobble Chopper was also recovered from this horizon in N18W16. This feature is undoubtedly related to similar concentrations found several years ago in this level in the main East Lobe excavation (see notes by Patricia Young).

Evening meeting with Chief and Council of WRFN in Beaver Creek. Outlined current research schedule and discussed possibility of conducting survey for historic graveyard and other evidence of land use at Coffee Creek at the end of July / early August.

Tuesday 26 June

Morning seminar on cataloguing followed by further language instruction by Ruth through lunchtime. Back to excavations in pm beginning around 1:30 after Ruth leaves. Rainy, cold day.

S3W23



Geoff and Alina removed B1 to top of Ash, which seems to be a mixture of WRA and possibly ash related to the hearth feature. Three basalt flakes and red ochre recovered.

S4W23



Excavated first 5 cm level of B2; recovered 4 basalt flakes and 3 black chert flakes. A large accumulation of charcoal is located under the stump along the west wall. Another 2 concentrations of charcoal is in the NW Q. All will be sampled tomorrow.

S15W21



Excavated remaining B2 to 5 cm into Loess and second level to 10 cm into Loess. Completed Q of this unit.

N3W8

Excavated into B2 level, working around roots in our attempt to not kill the associated trees here by the cookshack.

N3W9



Excavated unit to the B1/Ash mixed layer. Mapped and photographed. Continued into B2 in SE Q. Chert, obsidian, and basalt flakes recovered.

Team Anthony spent the day cataloguing.

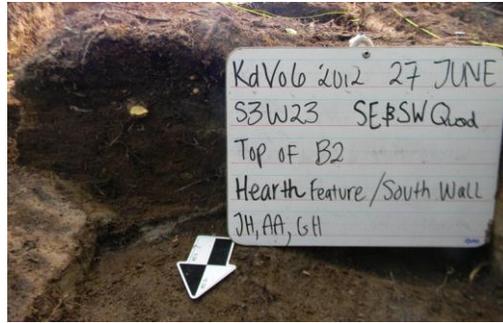
Polly Hyslop from Northway arrived in the evening and spent time with students in language lessons on greetings, introductions, weather, and some animals.

Wednesday 27 June

Second morning seminar on cataloguing, reviewing description of artefacts and morphological features. No language seminar this am since Ruth is to Northway. Set up PH on transcribing some tapes and remainder of crew continues excavations and sampling. Mid-day trip to town to check status of GIS program.

S3W23





Excavated unit to top of B2; mapped and photographed. NE and NW Qs excavated to 1st level at B2 minus five cm, second level started. Hearth? Feature appearing in SW and SE Qs at the top of the B2. Chert, obsidian, and basalt flakes recovered.

S4W23



Sample 2012-02a



Sample 2012-02b



Sample 2012-02c



Three charcoal samples collected from unit in the NW and SW Qs; S2012-a, -b, -c. Unit excavated further to 10 cm below B2; two flakes and microblade fragment recovered. Hearth? Feature in SW Q photographed.

N3W8 / N3W9



N3W8 excavated to 5 cm below B2; recovered obsidian flakes and associated bone fragments. Excellent excavation skills demonstrated by Keith and Diana preserving the primary root system.

N3W9 was excavated through the first B2 level in the SE and NW Qs; obsidian, chert, and jasper flakes recovered.

N18W16 / N17W16





Rain from past two days has washed out part of the unit's surface; cleaned up. Took down Northern Qs of N18W16 to level at bottom of "O" horizon / top of first Loess level to uncover Hearth Feature F2012-06. Sampled associated charcoal, photos.

Thursday 28 June

Jordan Handley leaving site today; Mark Young accompanying to Whitehorse to return Friday pm.

Remnants of Teams Juliet and Anthony assigned to artifact cataloguing for the day.

Team November continued excavation through day.

Mike Grooms continued core sampling across the site, completing all planned transects.

Six visiting tourists given site tours.

N3W8



The unit was completed down to the base of the B2 above ice-fractured and heaved bedrock regolith (R). Nine flakes – 4 basalt, 3 obsidian, 2 chert – recovered. Excavation of this unit ended at this point.

N3W9



Three Qs down to B2 / R interface; SW Q completed by Niki, Mike, and Keith later in evening. One flake recovered.

Friday 29 June

Rachelle, Kendra, Dianna and Keith catalogued through the day.

Michael Grooms and Geoff set up total station and recorded provenience of West Lobe unit surfaces and bases of excavation. Test pits from 2011 and MGs soil core locations within sight range were shot as well for a total of about 78 locations.

N3W8 / N3W9

Profiles and photos completed – end of units; backfilled.

Saturday 30 June

Raining all day. Backfilled about a half of the West Lobe units and assorted camp chores undertaken by MG. Norm to Tok for supplies; both credit cards refused and most material purchased with cash. Geoff, Rachelle, and Kendra catalogued.

S3W23 / S4W23

Both units excavated down through B2 to a max of B2 minus 15 cm around central hearth feature spanning the two units; seventeen flakes of grey chert and basalt recovered.

N17W16 / N18W16



Excavated to top of first Loess in N17W16 and 5 cm below this in southern Qs. Exposed hearth feature 2012-06 further and mapped more exposed cobbles which were then bagged. Levelled N18W16 to a working surface in order to proceed by arbitrary levels to top of the first loess.

Sunday 1 July – Canada Day

Spent the morning in Beaver Creek participating in the Canada Day parade which was forshortened due to the rainy weather. Mark Young and I returned to camp after the cake at the Interpretive Centre and organized supplies and food bought the previous day. Remainder of crew remains in the village for their day off doing day off things.

Monday 2 July

Very wet night and day. Excavations continue in open units by teams Anthony and November. Remainder of crew backfill and set up big new industrial tarps – one on the West Lobe for use by the Art and Archaeology participants expected later today, another over the East Lobe main Pit of Despair. Norm in village to straighten out credit card problems and print out Mid-Term exam after the printer refuses to work (probably due to humidity). Snag and Mirror Creeks are swollen high above their banks and there is more water sitting about than I have ever seen in the area in 20 years.

S3W23 / S4W23

Excavations continued to define the hearth feature in the B2. In S3W23 the NW Q was taken down to Loess. At the interface of the bottom of the B2 and the top of the Loess an exhausted Wedge-Shaped Microblade Core made on vitreous black chert was recovered; it lay vertically inclined at c. 45 – 60 degrees and is provenienced as Z=49 cm bd and Top of Loess / Bottom of B2. I do not believe that it is in association with the B2 Hearth Features we have been working on in these units but there is a slim possibility it is associated with the hearth Feature from last year in the adjacent test pit. We are working this excavation as French as possible to determine whether a date on any of the charcoal samples available to us is related to this, our first unequivocal microblade core remnant recovered at Little John in our tenth year of excavations.



N18W16



Excavations continued to define cobble / pebble complex of Feature 2012-07, a large Late Prehistoric hearth feature. The unit was excavated a further 10 cm and related cobbles and pebbles were mapped and photographed.

The day ended with the arrival of David and Ruth Johnny with Eddie and Tamika, followed shortly by Naomi Crey and the Art and Archaeology participants, who number ten in total; seven participants bailed on the project in consideration of the current and projected weather of rain for the next days. Accompanying them was Lauriane Bourgenon of U of Montreal, a graduate student we are hosting for the next two weeks in order to familiarize her with Yukon Pleistocene archaeology at the request of her supervisor, Dr. Ariane Burke, prior to her undertaking taphonomic studies of the Beringian fauna collection recovered from the Bluefish Caves for her dissertation. We sorted out accommodation and provided a general introduction to the site to them and three Westmark folk who came to visit.

Tuesday 3 July

Mid-term for students written first in the AM while Naomi and crew collect spruce boughs to provide a dry floor for her Art and Archaeology participants under the 20 by 40 tarp we have erected over the excavated portion of the West Lobe. New crews and units established with the additional participants.

- Lauriane assigned to Team November with Niki and Alina; map hearth Feature 2012-08 and collect carbon Samples 2012-04 A & B; continue excavation of B2 in both units.
- Michael and Rachelle assigned to Team Triple A (Arcom Art and Archaeology); they will complete Qs in N5W8 NQs, N5W9 SEQ, and N4W9 SQs;
- Team Anthony (Mark and Keith) to continue excavations of N17W16 / N18W16; assigned Austin and Caroline.
- Geoff, Kendra, and Diana to continue cataloguing.

Ended day with painting with Naomi Crey after dinner. Landscapes of Mirror Creek most popular, with a moose and some artifacts rounding out the efforts. Ruth visits and talks native language with participants.

S3W23 / S4W23

Continued excavation of B2 around hearth Feature 2012-08. Two related charcoal samples collected (S2012-04a and S2012-04b) from S4W23. Profiled the North baulk of S4W23 prior to bringing it down. N Qs of S3W23 and S Qs of S4W232 excavated to loess surface. Two jasper microblade / flakes and one black chert flake recovered.

N4W9



Excavated to Top of B1 with mixed ash. Continued to bottom of stratum. Birch log remains mapped as Feature 2012-10 at bottom of B1 / top of B2.

N5W8



Excavated A/O to top of B1. Decayed birch log mapped as Feature 2012-09.

N17W16 / N18W16





Completed mapping Feature 2012-07 (top and bottom left in photos above) with assistance of Austin and Carolyn. Excavated N Qs of N18W17 to top of loess. N17W16 excavated to 20 cm below Top of Loess, exposing ephemeral first paleosol (P1).

N5W8



Excavated A/O level and began excavation of B horizon.

Wednesday, 4 July



Excavated in AM until 11:30 departure to attend 4 July BBQ at BCreek Visitor Centre. Socialize with villagers and Americans passing through. Meet with Chief Eikland to discuss possible Coffee Creek pedestrian survey. Return to camp c. 2:00 pm. Continue excavations until dinner, with youth

participants being taught Hand Game / Stick Gambling by Naomi in late afternoon. David and Ruth, Patrick and Jackie Johnny, and a slew of kids and grandkids arrive to share. After dinner (32 people) the field crew are taught the hand game by the Sundog students. This is followed by David showing and speaking about his carving tools, process, raw material selection (with an emphasis on selecting quality pieces that meet your need and avoiding wasting – how to respect the wood you are cutting), appropriate treatment, storage, and Upper Tanana design elements. The event has 32 people on site at the camp for the evening and conversations and instruction continues until 12:30 am.

N5W8 / N4W9



These units are staked out using total station to complete excavation of unfinished 2010 units N3W6 and N4W6 – the new numbers are put on the excavation books – **n.b. catalogue entries from 2010 will need to be corrected to these new numbers.** With assistance of Art Camp kids N5W8 is excavated to top of Ash level.

N17W16 / N18W16



KdVob62012 4 July
 N17W16
 Top P2/Loess-35cm
 -End 04 July-
 KS N↑



KdVob62012 4 July
 N18W16
 Loess, Pebbly loess, B
 -End 04 July-
 KS+my N↑



N17W16 excavated to top of second paleosol (P2) in South Qs at c. 40 cm below Top of Loess. N18W16 excavated to top of fine loess with some B2 hearth remaining in the SW Q. Found nothing but disappointment.

Thursday, 5 July

Excavations in AM. Because of Ida Wilson's funeral potlatch for her husband taking place in Northway this afternoon / evening Naomi and her crew are leaving site after lunch and the main Little John crew is travelling to Northway to assist in the feast preparations and participate in the potlatch. We leave camp c. 3 pm and arrive Northway c. 3:30 pm Alaska time, passing the funeral procession to the graveyard going up as we go down to Northway Village. Meet with chief cook and pass on two boxes of food for feast and students to assist where needed. Gift potlatch host (son, Maynard Wilson) with \$200.00 to assist with his work today. Meet with Belinda Thomas and Lorraine Titus of Northway Village Council and Corporation and confirm approval to undertake further survey at Deadman Lake next Friday and Saturday in collaboration with same and participation of interested Northway youth and others. They will provide boat and gunman / guide to access the site. Discuss land transfer survey which will probably not be on until next year now due to difficulties related to negotiations with Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge. Meet with slew of friends at potlatch, including Auntie Darlene Northway, Cora Demit, and Danny Thomas, of Northway, all of who approve of our work at Cheljuud Mann Cho / Deadman Lake and hope to come to our tea. Jerry Issac and Kenny Thomas of Tanacross discuss 'holy rollers' and their lack of acceptance of Dineh Way – they also, as usual, enthusiastically lead the people in the Drum Dances that follow the feast. Jerry's grand-daughter and niece bring the youth into the song and dance, although this is not difficult tonight – the 150 or so attendees are all singing and dancing. Students participate awkwardly but well, and I am invited to delight everyone with my version of "the white

man's twist dance" with Polly Hyslop. Gift giving, including a small but significant gift to the crew as a whole, takes until 3 pm. Return to BCreek customs check-in and bed at camp c. 4:30 am.

S3W23 / S4W23



Completed exposure of hearth feature that spans both units. Photographed and mapped both units.

N4W9



Continued excavations through B1 / Ash mixture and further into B2 level.

N5W8



Excavated through B2 through the day, ending with pockets of fractured Regolith and some loess pockets, though the B2 largely sits directly atop the R level.

N17W16 / N18W16

Profiled South wall of N18W16. Sampled hearth feature in NW Q of N17W16 baulk – Sample 2012-05a and S2012-05b. Began excavation of W Q of baulk.

Friday, 6 July

Awake at 8 AM to Shorty bad bark and discover he has treed a younger (two year old?) bear on the periphery of camp. Arouse camp members and remove them and Shorty to the safety of vehicles. Call RCMP who arrive minutes after the fellow has debarked the tree and slunk off ignobly into the bush without incident. He left without anger, more with an attitude of just wanting to get away from here safely and with some modicum of dignity and I don't expect him to return. Nevertheless, I remind students on camp safety rules related to such visitors and make sure radios and spray are on every crew. No further sighting this day. Most of the crew works through the day with afternoon naps after our late bed the night before. Mike Grooms continues his sample collection across the site. David Johnny and Tamika visit for several hours in evening and he shares stories of the land with students. Fieldnotes 'till 1 am.

S3W22 / S3W23

S3W22 is a new unit being placed around the 2011 Test Pit that contained the original hearth feature. The test pit lies at about the center of the unit along the West wall. Levels and photographs taken and excavated to the Top of the B1 stratum.

S3W23 was excavated c. 5 cm to level of Top of Loess in SE, and N Qs and covered for further excavation after completion of S3W22.

N4W9

Completed excavation to basal regolith – four basalt flakes recovered in the SW Q at B2 + 5 cm.

N5W8

Continued excavation – NW Q down to Loess and further to regolith; one basalt flake recovered at the top of the loess.

N17W16 / N18W16

Completed excavation of N17W16 NW Q baulk wall between units. Will leave N18W16 at current level and concentrate on bringing N17W16 down further into paleosol strata. Top of P2 / Palaeosol Complex reached by end of day across N17W16.

Saturday, 7 July

Community Tea today, so preparations in AM and some limited excavation in N17W16. About 45 people through the afternoon into the evening. Five group site tours given, first by Mark and Mike, than with the students participating as well. Good food, good visits; ended day with crew into village for day off tomorrow.

Sunday, 8 July

Awoken c. 8:30 am by bicyclist visitor; provided tour and then into town for shower and laundry. Returned to camp in mid-afternoon. Niki and Mark work on their units some, remainder of crew lounge. Return to village to pick up girls but not tonight. Around 9 pm the same bear as the other day wanders into camp from path down below. Students sent to vehicles and bear chased from camp by two rifle shots. Eldred and I track it to discover it has been hanging around below for some time by the signs. Remove students to Ida's Motel for the night as a precaution.

Monday, 9 July

Depart for camp c. 10:30 with David Johnny who tracks our visitor to the creek and loses trail there. Our consensus is it has taken off, but vigilance remains the word and I set my alarm to check camp regularly through the night into the early morning. Chelsea and Leslie work with us today. Resume excavations after lunch, with catalogue crowd working on finishing quadrants in units N4W13 and N5W12 left unfinished from 2010, while Niki and Mark continue in their respective units in the SW and NW site quadrants.

S3W22 / S4W23

Excavated S3W22 from Top of B1, through Ash and into B2 minus 5 cm. Mike Grooms hammered core sample OSL-2012-04 in S4W23 at the interface of the B2 and Loess levels.

N5W3

Completed excavation of remaining NW and NE quadrants to frost fractured regolith.

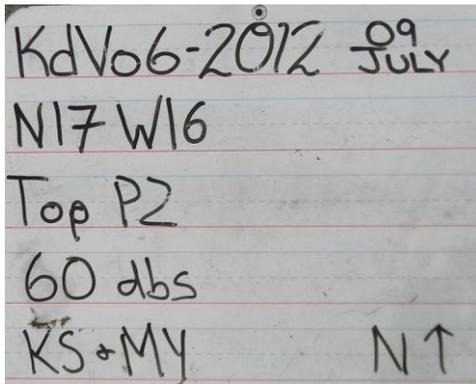
N4W13 / N5W12



These two units have small remnant portions yet to be excavated from 2010. Using the total station they are **redesignated: 2010 N3W9 is 2012 N5W12 and 2010 N2W10 is N4W13. Previous catalogues will need to be adjusted to reflect this.**

Excavation in each proceeded into the B2 through the day. Some flakes recovered.

N17W16





Cleared level to Top of PC / P2 and then excavated N Qs through P2. Multiple pieces of burned bone recovered along with the medial section of a lanceolate bifacial projectile point. Collected associated Sample 2012-07 of carbonized charcoal for dating.

N20W7



This new unit is being taken down by Mike Grooms in the SE Q for the purpose of OSL sampling. Excavated to Top of P1; nothing recovered.

Michael also profiled test unit at KdVo6 Soil Core 2012-01.

Tuesday, 10 July

A quiet night in camp, though restless sleep for me interrupted by camp checks until morning. Excavations through the day. Chelsea and Leslie work with us today but spend night in town. Mike completes samples in West Lobe units. Other units continued as detailed below.

S3W22 / S4W23

OSL 2012-04 core retrieved from unit S4W23 along with associated samples. Continued excavation of B2 in unit S3W22. NE Q excavated to Top of Loess, while the NW and SW Qs excavated to B2 minus 15 cm. Green chert microblade, obsidian flakes, and bone fragments recovered.

N5W12 / N4W13

Continued excavation of the small baulk remnant in N4W13; completed to regolith with no artifacts recovered. N5W12 continued into the B2 stratum, revealing several hearth ash concentrations that were exposed and mapped as Feature 2012-12. Excavated hearth ash and then continued through remaining B2 sediments to c. minus 10 cm. One flake logged but subsequently discarded on examination; thus, no artifacts recovered in these units to date.

N5W8 / N5W9



Profiled North wall of N5W8; unit completed. Excavation of N5W9 NE Q to bottom of B1 / Top of Ash and continued to Top of B2.

N17W16



Continued excavation of P2 in all Qs. Microblade and bone fragments recovered. Sampled charcoal in direct association with previously recovered biface fragment – S2012-09. SE Q excavated to Top of P3, c. 5 cm below Bottom of P2.

N20W7



Excavated to below P4. Several bison bone fragments were collected from the Loess level below P1 and above P2. No other artifacts were recovered. The sample Q was extended further to the North into the NE Q in order to provide an unslumped profile for taking the OSL samples from.

Wednesday, 11 July

Another quiet night. Chelsea and Leslie on site at 8:30 and work through day and stay the night. Hilltop units completed and profiled. Mike completes samples in main East Lobe excavation. Ranjit Pillai of Yukon College arrives from Whitehorse; he is conducting a community and educational impact assessment of the field program for both internal review and external use in a graduate course. Tour camp and go into village to introduce him to major collaborators, including Ruth Johnny, Chief Eikland, and several councillors and other community members. Diana and Laurianne depart with Ranj in the evening, while the crew continues work until 10 pm to set us up well for finishing tomorrow in anticipation of our leave-taking for Cheljuud Mann Cho / Deadman Lake excavations on Friday and Saturday.

S3W22 / S3W23



Continued excavations of bowl-like depressions of B2 sediment into the lower Loess level; mapped as Feature 2012-13. Excavation of hearth baulk between S3W22 and S3W23; recovered several flakes and blade-like flake on grey chert; associated charcoal samples S2012-10 and S2012-11 collected. Blade and samples stored together in level bag.



N4W13 / N5W12





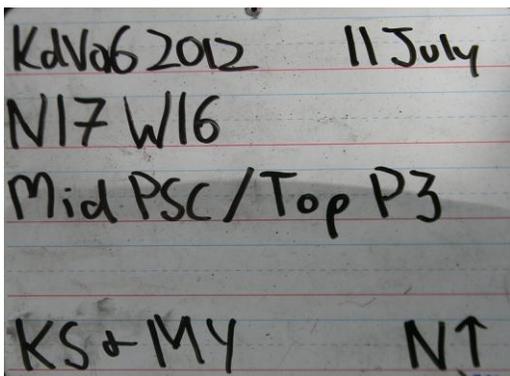
N4W15 W wall profile completed. N5W12 excavated to regolith throughout unit; no artifacts recovered. Began profiles of N and E walls; measurements completed but not drawing.

N5W8 / N5W9



Completed North wall profiles of both units; unit complete.

N17W16 / N18W16



KdV06 2012 11 July
N17 W16
0-5 below Mid PSC/P3
Cobbles + Bone In Situ
KS + MY N↑



KdV06 2012 11 July
N17 W16
0-5 below Mid PSC
Pedestals Removed
MY + KS N↑



Excavated loess in the middle of the Paleosol Complex between P2 and P3, exposing a number of cobbles at the top of the P3 level. Continued excavation to 5 cm into the P3 and removed cobbles to end excavation for the day. Photos of walls.

N20W7

Continued OSL sampling extractions of both tubed samples and associated matrix samples. No artifacts encountered.

Thursday, 12 July

Morning spent backfilling completed units and completing excavations. Collected soil tube samples from wet bog located to the southwest of the site on the muskeg below; mixed results but M. Grooms will examine more carefully in the lab over the winter with a view of possible pollen / diatom identifications. Afternoon clean-up of Little John camp and pack for trip to the David Site on Yukon River south of Eagle to work with Bob Sattler of Tanana Chiefs Conference, with two day stop at Cheljuud Mann Cho camp. Arrive Cheljuud Mann Cho Camp c. 7 pm. Set up camp, early evening.



S3W22 / S3W23 / S4W23





The remaining pedestalled areas of these units were excavated to Loess minus 5 cm and some Qs further to Loess minus 10 cm with some additional flakes recovered from the bottom of the B2 stratum. Profiles will be completed on our return after Dawson.

Friday, 13 July

Cheljuud Mann Cho Camp – further test excavations at the Sheppard Site above the campsite. Three flakes recovered in six 50 x 50 cm tests near previous tests; one utilized flake and two flakes recovered from the B2. No boat available to travel across the lake. Attend evening interpretive presentation by Teddy Northway of the Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge on traditional seasonal rounds and technology. Teddy and his sister return to our camp for tea and further discussion with the students on a range of topics.

**Saturday, 14 July**

Travel into Northway to visit with Darlene Northway. Return to campsite for birthday party for Tamika and Eddie Johnny. Travel to Tok to meet Bob Sattler and make food purchases. Travel to Eagle, Alaska; arrive c. midnight and set camp at the Eagle State Park.



Sunday, 15 July – Thursday 19 July



Up at 5:30 am and depart Eagle via Andy Basich transport to David Site, Calico Bluff, Yukon River c. 9:30 am. Spend day setting up camp and undertaking orientation to site localities and plan of our excavations this week, which consists of completing excavation blocks in the locality upriver of Andy's garden.



The David site contains at least three major occupations from the late, middle, and earlier Holocene periods, c. 500 – 1000 years ago, 2500 – 3000 years ago, and 5000 – 6000 years ago. It is located along the west bank of the Yukon River just upstream of Calico Bluff, a major argillite source, which is the predominant lithic material found at the site. Recovered implements consist of large blocky flake cores, a variety of edge-modified flakes, and end and side scrapers. No projectile forms have been recovered to date. Faunal remains include moose, caribou, wapiti, and small mammals.



The students work well all week under the supervision of Bob Sattler; I provide camp support, cooking meals and preparing snacks. All excavations are completed to Bob's satisfaction by Thursday afternoon, after which we secure camp and travel back to Eagle to camp for the night. A report on the week's activities will be prepared by Sattler and I later in the year.

Friday 20 July – Sunday 22 July

Travel to Dawson City, set up camp in the Yukon Government campsite. Weekend spent touring Dawson and attending the Dawson City Music Festival.

Monday 23 July

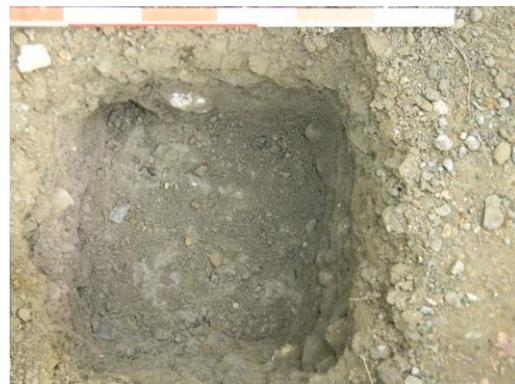
Depart Dawson and return to Whitehorse. Discharge students.

Tuesday 24 July – Thursday 26 July

Decommissioning gear, clean and return rental vehicle, submit accounting paperwork, and attend to Yukon College administrative requirements.

Friday 27 July – Wednesday 1 August

Return to Little John camp with Mark Young and Keith Saunders to complete final excavations of units and related profiles in S3/4W23 and S3W22 units, present update to WRFN, and decommission camp.



Monday evening Victoria Castillo, historic archaeologist at Yukon College, and Grant Zazula, Yukon Paleontologist arrive for camp visit. Provide tour and update of excavations at Little John, including historic features to Victoria and overview of 2010-2012 faunal remains to Grant. On Tuesday meet with

Chief Eikland to discuss Coffee Creek survey and then take Victoria and Grant to Alaska Highway builders dump down the road. Tuesday afternoon spent testing at Taatsaan T'oh / Red Hill by Canada Customs; five test pits recover a small amount of debitage in the B1 and upper B2. Wednesday spent decommissioning camp and preparing for Coffee Creek trip.



Thursday 2 August – Sunday 5 August

Travel to Coffee Creek on Thursday with Mark Young, Keith Saunders, and Chief Charlie Eikland jr. at request of WRFN in order to undertake pedestrian survey of the riverfront area in search of historic features related to WRFN membership occupation of the area in the late 19th and 20th centuries. A separate report on this survey will be prepared and submitted to participating First Nations and the Heritage Branch. Fixed wing flight to Dawson City on Friday evening and attendance at Moosehide Gathering for interviews with Elders in attendance regarding Coffee Creek and Ladue Creek traditional occupations and use and liaison with representatives of THFN Heritage department. Return to Little John camp on Sunday evening via Top of the World highway.

Monday 6 August

Final breakdown and pack up of Little John camp. Depart Beaver Creek c. 8:30 pm; arrive Whitehorse c. 4:00 am. Keith Saunders departs Whitehorse on morning flight.

Tuesday 7 August – Thursday 8 August

Yukon College administration, decommissioning gear, final artifact cataloguing, pdf fieldnotes, and complete this report.

Concluding Remarks

The 2012 Borderlands Culture History research program and field school proved to be one of the best in some years, largely facilitated by the participation of graduate students and research assistant Mark Young, all of whom had previous experience with the project. This allowed for a greater sharing of camp, instructional, and excavation management and gave me more time to devote to higher level management of research, instruction, and administrative responsibilities. The participation of David and Ruth Johnny in providing cultural instruction was also very high this year. This resulted in the students spending more time involved in activities related to culture and less in unit excavation, leading to a lower productivity in excavation volume and artifact recovery, however this is not regarded as a bad thing since the cultural component of this program is its most unique feature for participants. Nevertheless, our archaeological discoveries were significant as well, including the recovery of the first complete microblade core at the site and the determination that intact and extensive cultural remains, including both formed tools and preserved bone, are to be found in the northwestern area of the site to the west of the upper East Lobe excavations and to the North of the lower West Lobe excavations demonstrate that the Little John site continues to hold much of interest to our understanding of the region's prehistory yet to be revealed in the years to come. The initiation of an Art and Archaeology component, a notion that I have been trying to activate for some years, was very exciting and I am looking forward to developing this initiative further in years to come.