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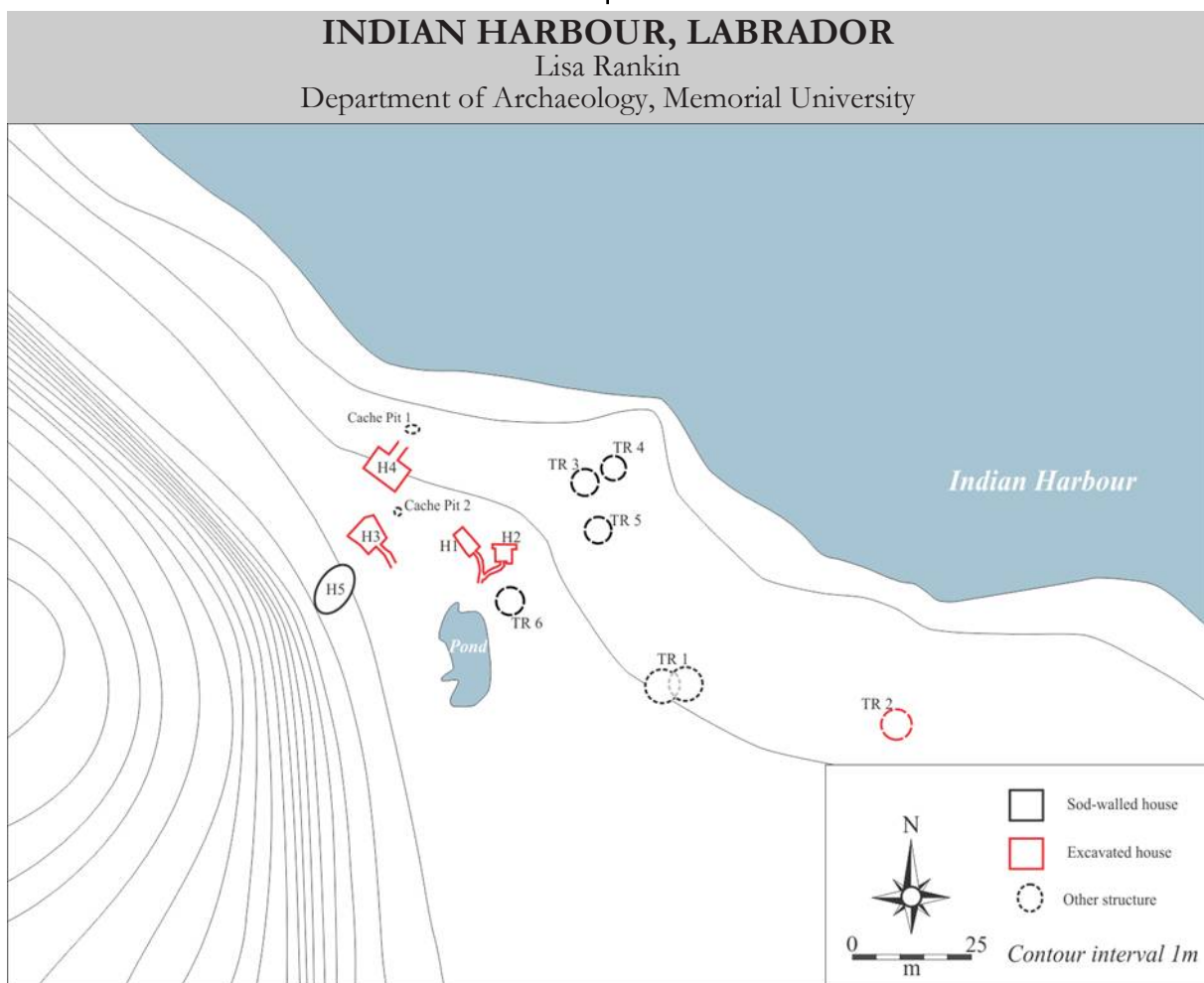


Figure 1 Map of the Indian Harbour site, updated in light of the 2011 excavations.

In 2011, I again conducted excavations at an historic period Inuit site (FkBg-03) at Indian Harbour, on Huntingdon Island near Cartwright, Labrador (Figure 1). This was part of the Memorial University CURA project

“Understanding the Past to Build the Future” (www.mun.ca/labmetis). For six weeks in July and August, with a crew six students, I excavated one large winter house structure and carried out a survey in the vicinity to identify

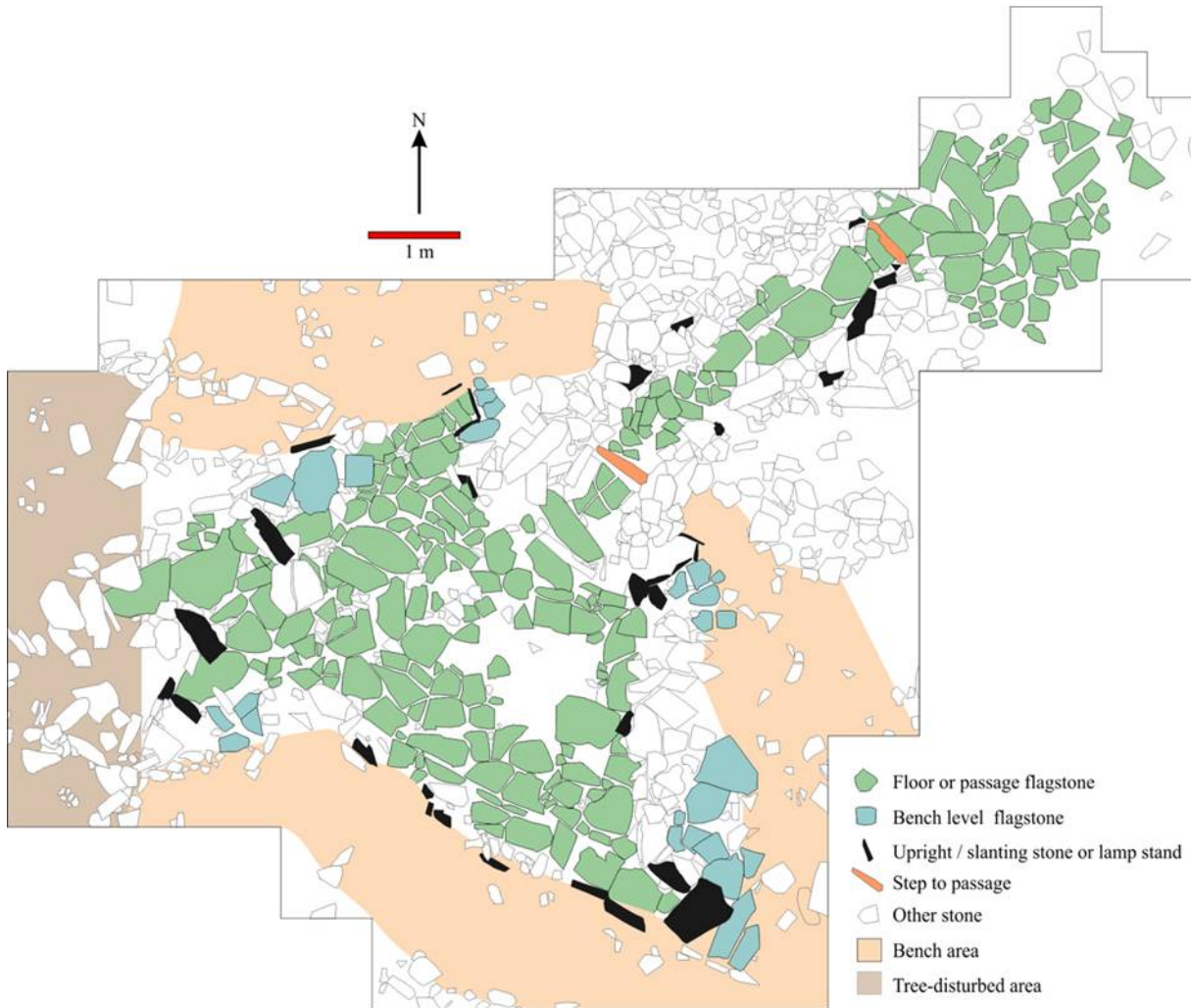


Figure 2 Plan of House 4 following excavation.

one or more sites for excavation in the coming field season. Crewmembers this season were CURA Research Assistant Robyn Fleming and Memorial students Phoebe Murphy, Laura Kelvin, Eliza Brandy, Andrew Collins and Vicky Allen. Local students Chelsea Morris, Brandon Morris and Kellie Clark processed artifacts in our lab in Cartwright. The lab was supervised by a different student crewmember each week, and the students posted their experiences and thoughts on the CURA website blog.

Excavation in 2011 focused on House 4, the largest house at the site, and the only one that is oriented towards the ocean rather than the small pond. The architectural features of House 4 had made it seem likely that it was later than the other houses excavated. We

thought that it might date to the period of English occupation of the Labrador coast (i.e. post-1763), in contrast to the other, earlier houses that were occupied either in the French period (House 3), or before (Houses 1 and 2). As such, we hoped that the excavation of House 4 would add yet another dimension to the analysis of changing Inuit-European relations in the Sandwich Bay area in the early historic era. In the course of the excavation the structure known as House 5, thought to be a separate house immediately north of House 4, was revealed to be simply the northern part of House 4. As a result, a structure at the western edge of the site previously labeled as House 6 has been re-named House 5 (Figure 1).



Figure 3 Iron end blade with bone shaft.



Figure 4 Iron ulu blade.



Figure 5 Whale bone sled shoe with wooden dowel.

House 4

House 4 is the northernmost structure on the site. The floor, benches and entrance passage of House 4 were completely excavated (Figure 2). The house interior has a roughly trapezoidal shape, tapering from the back wall towards the front. The back wall measures 5.6 m, the front wall measures 3.4 m, and the house is 2.95 m from front to back. There are five alcoves in all, one at each corner of the floor area and an additional one on the back wall near the westernmost corner. The entrance passage is approximately 5.4 m long, and curves very slightly. There is a step down from the house floor into the entrance tunnel, and near the outer end a step up to an irregularly shaped paved area approximately 2.5 m square.

Eleven hundred and twenty-eight artifacts identifiable as to material and origin were recovered from House 4. Of these 85 were traditional Inuit items (some incorporating European materials) or fragments of traditional Inuit materials. Among them are iron end-blades (Figure 3), an iron ulu blade



Figure 6 Toy soapstone pot.

(Figure 4), whalebone sled shoes (Figure 5) and a toy soapstone pot (Figure 6).

Nine hundred and thirty-six objects were items of European manufacture or fragments of European materials, including metal, ceramics, glass and wool. The European items included 393 spikes and nails, 69 fragments of glass, 40 kaolin pipe fragments, 30 fragments of ceramics, 22 glass beads, 22 roof tile fragments, 15 knife parts, 6 fish-



Figure 7 Rim sections of Normandy stone ware.



Figure 9 Iron key.

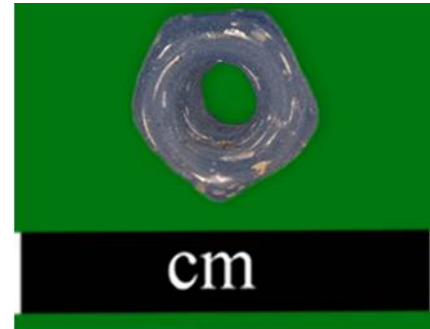


Figure 8 Glass bead.



Figure 10 Base of Stone ware jar.

hooks, 9 other hooks, 2 hinges, 1 gaffe, 1 needle, 1 spoon, and numerous metal scraps (Figures 7 to 10).

Also recovered were 107 items of probable Recent Indian origin, including flakes and nodules of Ramah chert, other chert, quartzite and quartz. Most notable here was a substantial cache of large Ramah chert flakes to one side of the entrance passage.

House 4 is the biggest and most internally complex house at the site. Based on the European assemblage, it appears to date to the French period on the Labrador coast, probably around the middle of the 18th Century. It is most likely to be roughly contemporaneous with House 3, and the two structures may well have been inhabited at the same time.

A substantial faunal collection is currently being analyzed, and radiocarbon samples are being prepared for submission to Beta

Analytic

Other Activities

Also in 2011, we identified the site of Pidgeon Cove 1, a small Inuit house in a sheltered cove. Unlike the other early historic Inuit sites in the area, this site contains only one house and the house itself appears to be quite small. We plan to excavate this structure in 2012 because it should give us an insight into a settlement type that we have not investigated before.

As in all our previous years working in the Cartwright area, we held a community day on which local residents were invited to come, view the site, and learn about our activities there. Approximately 100 people took advantage of this opportunity over the course of a long day.