

Archaeological Discovery In Canada Leads To Groundbreaking Revelation

By David Whittaker, Sep 16, 2018

<http://www.drivepedia.com/trending/archaeological-discovery-canada>

(This is a long article, but highlights a common problem... why aren't cultural anthropologists given equal weight as "regular" anthropologists? ~ Don Chapin)

Deep within the Great Bear Rainforest, on the remote Triquet Island off Canada's western coast, a group of archeologists made the discovery of a lifetime. They began digging without any expectations, but their incredible finding would ultimately bring an ancient folktale to life.

Unearthing History

It was the first archaeological dig carried out on the remote island, and the participants weren't expecting to find much. However, deep down they wanted to believe that the stories they heard were true. What would they uncover in the cold Canadian mud?



[by Taboola](#)

Peeling Away The Layers

Working in cooperation with a group of students from the University of Victoria, the archeologists toiled away as they dug deeper and deeper into the earth, carefully removing one layer after another. At the eight foot mark, they finally came across what they were after –

deposits of fossil soil. They came to this island expecting to carry out a routine dig, but now, everything had changed. The archeologists were completely shocked. What would they uncover within the fossil soil?



Beneath The Mud

Deep within the thick mud, the archeologists identified the remains of an ancient style of oven called a hearth. They also found burnt pieces of charcoal alongside the oven. This one discovery had the

potential to change the entire human history of not just this single island, but of the entire North American hemisphere. However, before jumping to conclusions, the archaeologists needed to be sure that their evidence was legitimate, so they continued to dig for more clues.



Hidden Surprises

As their search continued, they came across a whole wealth of other surprising artifacts including various types of weapons, as well as tools for hunting, fishing, and lighting fires. Both the students and the archaeologists couldn't believe how much evidence they had uncovered. When they first began the dig, they were skeptical that they'd find the slightest traces of anything worthwhile. Now, they found themselves standing on a potentially groundbreaking discovery. But the most significant piece of the puzzle was yet to come.



A Local Legend

Considering that most historians doubted that this island was ever inhabited, what drove the team of archeologists to dig there in the first place? Their hypothesis came from local stories about the Heiltsuk people. The Heiltsuk people claimed for centuries that they were the first nation indigenous to the Great Bear Rain Forest and that their ancestors came to Triquet Island to seek refuge during the Ice Age. However, archeologists and scientists have denied these claims due to a lack of prehistoric proof. How could this be?



Engulfed In Ice?

Throughout the Ice Age, a vast majority of Western Canada was completely covered in ice and was therefore uninhabitable. Because Triquet Island is situated just off the coast of British Columbia, scientists have long assumed that it too was frozen during the Ice Age. This is why historians, scientists, and archeologists have rejected the claims of the Heiltsuk people. However, the group of archaeologists digging on Triquet Island would soon discover something that would shake this notion to its core.



Proof At Last

The Heiltsuk people were optimistic that the findings of the archeological expedition would support their claims that they had

historical ownership over the land on Triquet Island. Until then, the oldest artifact in favor of their existence on the island dated back to about 7190 BCE. The only issue was that the Heiltsuk people were known for a lifestyle centered around fishing. Based on the new findings, however, the ancient inhabitants of Triquet Island had a much different diet...



Following The Clues

Among the various artifacts found during the archeological excavation on Triquet Island were spears and other tools presumed to be used for hunting. When the researchers took a closer look at

these artifacts, they realized that the spears were far too big to be used for fishing. Moreso, the island was virtually absent of land mammals for which a spear of this size would be practical. Something here didn't add up. The archaeologists were determined to get to the bottom of it.



Unanswered Questions

The only logical conclusion as to why the spear remains were so large was that the inhabitants of Triquet Island lived off of the meat of large marine mammals like walruses, seals, and sea lions. The biggest unanswered question was when exactly they hunted these animals. Could there possibly be some truth to the legends of the Heiltsuk people? Did these inhabitants, whoever they were, find a means for survival during the frigid years of the Ice Age?



The Truth In The Charcoal

Among all the artifacts that were dug up, the charcoal flakes from the ancient oven were perhaps the most useful. While they might

seem insignificant to the untrained eye, the archaeologists knew that these burnt crumbs were incredibly valuable to the investigation. By using carbon dating methods, scientists would be able to pinpoint the exact age of these artifacts. The archaeologists carefully removed the particles, sent them to a lab, and patiently waited for the results. In the meantime, they carried on with their exploration.



Piecing Together The Puzzle

While anxiously awaiting the lab results, the archaeologists continued to piece together the story of the ancient inhabitants of Triquet Island. They soon uncovered cutting and woodworking tools made from a volcanic glass called obsidian. Because this part of British Columbia had never seen volcanic activity, the only conclusion that researchers could draw was that the people who once lived on this island traveled a long way, perhaps crossing large bodies of water, to get their hands on obsidian.



A Mysterious Disappearance

On the beach, the archaeologists managed to find fossils of a trash heap, called a midden. They also dug up the remnants of clam

gardens along with fish hooks and traps, suggesting that the inhabitants of Triquet Island shifted their diet from marine mammals to small seafood. Altogether, it seemed that there was plenty of available food. If that was the case, why did these people leave? Researchers would soon discover the answer to this question, and the truth was darker than anyone could've imagined.



The Perfect Storms

With more exploration of Triquet Island came more discoveries. The archaeologists soon found evidence indicating that two giant

tsunamis hit the island 6,700 years ago and 5,600 years ago. Based on the levels of beachfront sediment deposits, archaeologists determined that the ancient inhabitants were most likely on the island until the first tsunami hit, but that the natural disaster ended their habitation. According to one theory, a separate group with a different diet returned to Triquet Island centuries later. But there was more to the story.



Rethinking History

According to popular belief, as the Ice Age approached its end, humans crossed a prehistoric land bridge from Siberia to Alaska, moving from modern-day Asia to the Americas. Eventually, the ice melted, and the bridge disappeared as the sea levels rose. About 12,000 years ago, ancient humans were believed to have migrated south between two massive glaciers that covered Canada. Initially, the archaeologists figured there was no way that the artifacts found on Triquet Island came before this migration. They would soon rethink this assumption...



The Results Are In

In November 2016, the archaeologists finally got the answer they had been waiting for. The results from the carbon dating laboratory tests were finally in, and the implications were absolutely astonishing. It turns out that the charcoal fragments from the ancient oven were far older than anyone could've predicted. Who would've thought that such a seemingly insignificant particle from the past could have such a tremendous influence over human history not just in Canada, but in the entire American continent? But exactly how old were the artifacts?

A Discovery 14,000 Years In The Making

According to the carbon dating test results, the charcoal flakes dated back an extraordinary 14,000 years. This made the ancient hearth remains one of the oldest discoveries ever to be made in North America. To give some perspective, the Triquet Island archaeology site is three times older than the pyramids of Giza. It's also several millennia older than the invention of the wheel. The students and archaeologists were amazed that their faith in the Heiltsuk Nation resulted in such a groundbreaking revelation. This would change our understanding of history...



Historical Implications

The Triquet Island artifacts were 14,000 years old, implying that a group of people inhabited the island roughly 2,000 years before the end of the Ice Age. With these findings, archaeologists could confidently conclude that Triquet Island was never covered by one of the massive glaciers that engulfed Canada during this time period. This was a clear contradiction of what historians had

believed up until this point in time. This realization would soon bring even more historical implications.



Traveling By Sea

It had been previously established that prehistoric humans crossed a land bridge to get to North America from Asia, and eventually

followed bison from north to south through a gap in the glaciers. However, based on simple geography, it's clear that in order to get to Triquet Island, people would have needed access to boats. With boats, the ancient people would have been able to travel up the coast in search of ice-free areas. This revelation changed every prior assertion about human migration.



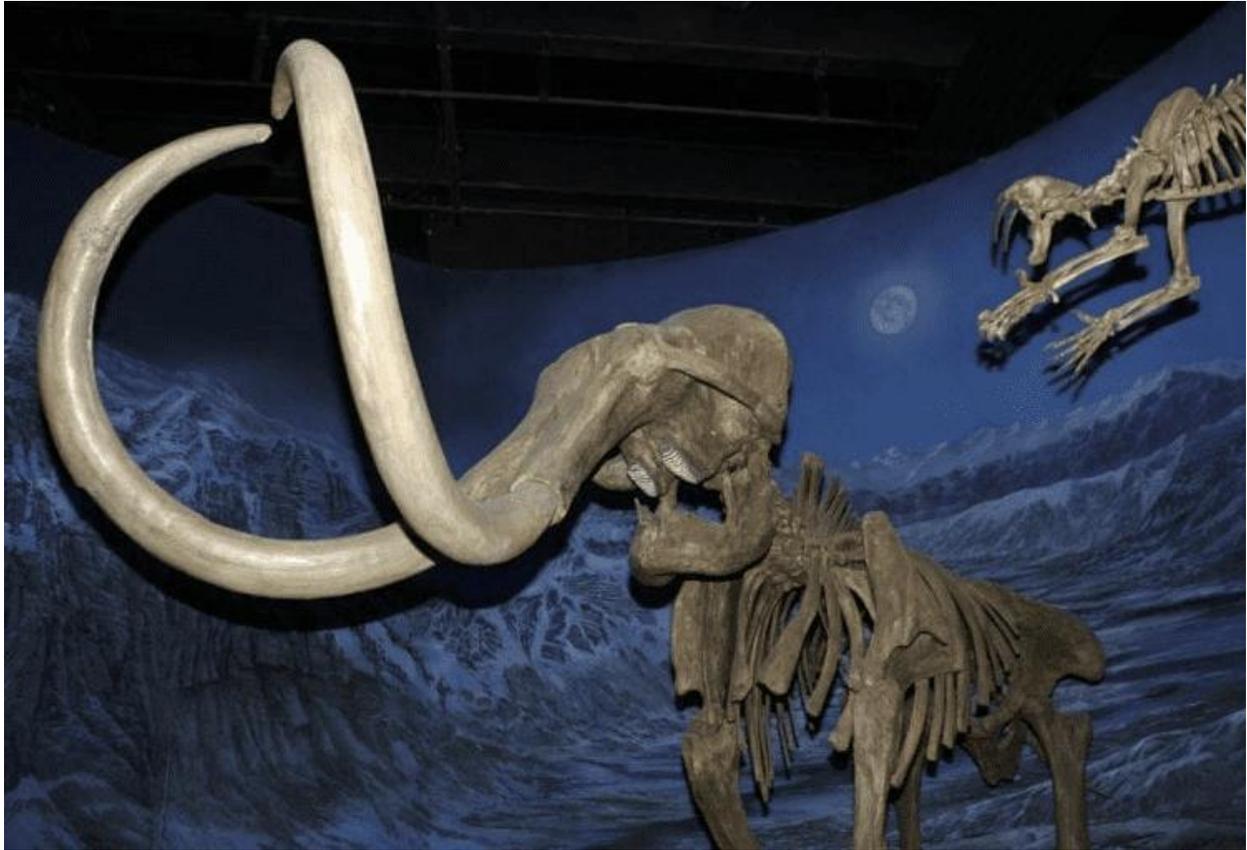
The Initial Explorers

Moreso, the timeframe in which humans inhabited Triquet Island was actually 2,000 years earlier than the previous assumption of when humans arrived in North America. The artifacts found on Triquet Island served as proof that humans were actually present on the continent for much longer than previously believed. Although Christopher Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci typically get all the credit for discovering North America, it turns out that the ancient pioneers from Triquet Island made it there first.



Walking With Beasts

Although the journeys of Columbus and Vespucci were undoubtedly challenging, they didn't come close to facing the hardships of the Triquet Island settlers. This group of ancient people would have come across various species of prehistoric beasts, including mastodons, woolly mammoths, bear-sized sloths, lions, cheetahs, saber-toothed tigers, and dire wolves. The only reason they were able to survive such deadly conditions was the consistency of the sea level, which was stable at Triquet Island for 15,000 years and allowed the land to remain inhabitable.



The Heiltsuk's History

Archaeologists proved that some group of prehistoric humans lived on Triquet Island roughly 14,000 years ago. The question that remained was whether or not these humans were the direct ancestors of the Heiltsuk people. Until now, the oldest evidence of the existence of the Heiltsuk Nation was roughly 9,000 years old. If the people who populated Triquet Island 14,000 years ago were the ancestors of the modern-day Heiltsuk Nation, the tribe's longevity would be extremely impressive. Looking deeper, something else about the Heiltsuk people was even more astounding.



The Heiltsuk People In A Nutshell

Philip Hogan gave a clear summary of who the Heiltsuk people were and even what language they spoke. “The Heiltsuk people have lived in their lands; on what has come to be called the Central Coast of British Columbia, since time immemorial,” he wrote. “Formerly known as the Bella Bella Indians, the Heiltsuk speak Hailhzaqvla, the Heiltsuk language. Hailhzaqvla is considered a separate language but is part of what linguists call the Wakashan language family.”

Heiltsuk Nation

Not only do the Heiltsuk people have a rich history, but they still maintain a strong identity until this very day and are legally recognized in British Columbia. With their own First Nations government, this population of about 1,600 people still speaks the ancient Heiltsuk language and are a combination of five distinct tribal groups. It makes sense that this nation is still located in Bella Bella, British Columbia as Bella Bella is another name that these people are historically referred to as.

Preserved Culture

The Heiltsuk people’s rich history can also be found in the many ancient relics attributed to it. As they were believed to be nomads who eventually settled in North America, these people have always had a unique culture, which is clearly demonstrated by the works of art, spiritual sculptures, and two-dimensional pieces. Probably the most well-known artist of the Heiltsuk culture is canoe-maker Captain Carpenter...

Captain Carpenter

Captain Carpenter is at the forefront of modern Heiltsuk culture, having produced some of the most intriguing pieces of work attributed to these people over 150 years ago. He was a chief of the Heiltsuk people during his heyday and only adopted an English name because of his reputation as a skilled carver. Even though Carpenter’s work came thousands of years after his ancestors roamed with woolly mammoths, his work is proof of an unbroken chain of identity passed from generation to generation...









Long Line Of Heiltsuk Artists

It's not just Captain Carpenter who carried the torch of the Heiltsuk people and its culture in more recent times. Before him came the likes of Chief Robert Bell, who was a prolific artist as well during the 19th century. He was then followed by a man call Enoch, before Carpenter eventually took on the mantle as Chief. Other important artists that followed Carpenter included the likes of General Dick and Daniel Houstie, who were both around at the same time.

From Generation To Generation

Since the beginning of their oral history, the Heiltsuk people had claimed that their ancestors came to Triquet Island during the Ice Age. Even though the scientific community rejected these claims,

Heiltsuk Nation persisted. Now, there was finally some sort of evidence proving their claims to be true. When you think about it, the most impressive aspect of this story was the Heiltsuk people's ability to preserve the story of their ancestors without even having a system of written language.



Keeping Their Story Alive

Somehow, the Heiltsuk people preserved the story of their forefathers for thousands of generations. When scientific and historical experts shunned them and discredited their oral history as legend or folklore, they refused to back down. Thanks to a special team of archaeologists and students, legitimate findings are finally working in their favor and bringing the narrative of their ancestors back to life. In doing so, these explorers uncovered a deeper truth about mankind and the history of humans on Earth.



