



N'tolonapemk Our Relatives' Place

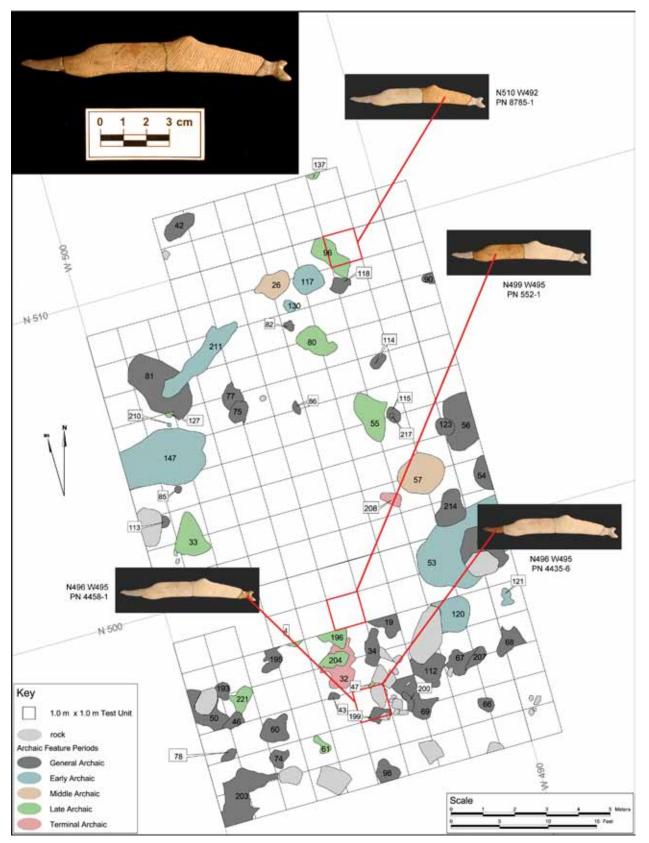
Native Americans have lived on Meddybemps Lake at its outlet to the Dennys River for at least 8,600 years. The Passamaquoddy people have named this site N'tolonapemk, which means "Our Relatives' Place." It is centrally located

within the ancestral Passamaquoddy territory in eastern Maine and southwestern New Brunswick. This location affords easy travel by canoe to the ocean, the St. Croix River, the lakes and waterways of interior Maine and New Brunswick, and to the abundant and varied resources these settings provide.

N'tolonapemk has always been known to the Passamaquoddy people; this important place lives on today in their oral history and traditional stories. Archaeologists have known about the site since the 1960s, but only recently has its historic and scientific importance become more widely understood through archaeological research.

This is the story of N'tolonapemk as seen through archaeology and the stories and knowledge of the Passamaquoddy people. The scientific methods used by archaeologists and traditional Passamaquoddy stories complement, and sometimes contradict, one another to create a more complete picture of this important place.

A Most Unique Object



One of the most intriguing artifacts recovered from the site is a small object found in four pieces from four separate locations. It is about 4,300 years old and the four fragments were found widely scattered across the site. After realizing these small fragments fit together, they were glued together revealing quite a unique object.

What is it? What was is used for? There have been many ideas about its use – a fishing lure, a gauge for making fishing nets, or just a personal talisman or charm. What do you think?

-Ellen Cowie, Project Archaeologist

The four pieces of this artifact were found in different parts of the N'tolonapemk excavation. Each piece weathered in a different way, making some of the fragments different colors. When the object was made, it would have been all one piece and all the same color.



Summer Battles Winter

Long ago there was a beautiful woman, Nipon, whose name means summer. Her garments were made of fresh, green leaves and beautiful flowers covered her wigwam. Her grandmother, Komiwon, whose name means the rain, lived far away. When she visited her granddaughter, she always told Nipon, "The one thing you should never seek in your wandering is the Lahtoqehsonuk, the land of the north. That is the home of Pun, the winter, a deadly foe. If you wander to Lahtoqehsonuk your beauty will leave you, your green dress will fade, your hair turn gray, and your strength will leave you."

Nipon gave little attention to her grandmother Komiwon's warnings. One morning, as she sat by her wigwam in the bright sunshine, looking north, all she saw seemed strangely lovely, enchanted. She saw shining lakes, high, blue mountains, bright rolling rivers. Something came over her like a dream - she must rise up and go to the north, to Lahtoqehsonuk. She heard a voice, the voice of her grandmother the rain, "Listen, my daughter, if you go to the northland, Pun, the winter, will surely kill you!" But Nipon did not listen to her grandmother's warnings, for a spell was upon her.

She walked north for many days, for many moons. She heard a whisper, the voice of her grandmother, the rain, "Stop, my daughter." But this made her stubborn, and she went on. Then she felt something she had never felt before: cold. An unseen power drove her onward. The green leaves of her garment began to turn yellow and faded and were blown away in the wind. Her long hair turned gray, then white. The sun grew dim, and then shone no more, and she was very weak. The beautiful mountains were heaped with snow, and all the rivers and lakes in Lahtoqehsonuk were made of ice.

Komiwon, the rain, was sad. She saw no smoke coming from Nipon's wigwam, the flowers which had covered the wigwam were all yellow and faded, and all was silent. She knew that her granddaughter had been taken by Pun, the wicked winter. Quickly, she called for her bravest warriors: Sawonehsonuk, the south wind; Cipenuk, the east wind; and Sonutsekotonuk, the warming southwest wind. "Quickly," she cried, "travel to the Lahtoqehsonuk, fight like heroes, use all your power to rescue Nipon from Pun, the winter!"

The wind warriors flew quickly to the north. When Pun felt them arrive, he called to his warriors: the terrible north wind, the wild northwest wind, and the chill northeast wind, along with the frosts, the sleet and snow spirits. A great battle ensued, with the warriors from the south fighting the powers of the north. Pun, the winter, began to get warm, and sweat dropped from him. His strength was leaving him. Finally, he called to his warriors, "Set Nipon free, it is she who caused this." As he spoke these words, the winds were silenced, and turning her back on Lahtoqehsonuk and Pun, weary Nipon set out on the long journey home.

As she traveled, the sun grew warmer, the air was softer, rivers were rushing, lakes shone in the sunlight, and flowers unfolded in the warm breeze. Nipon was no longer weary, and her hair grew dark again. Butterflies and flowers greeted her as she passed. When she arrived back at her wigwam, she found her grandmother Komiwon inside, weary almost to death. She spoke to Nipon: "You have brought suffering on me and all things through your disobedience. But for my battle with Pun, all life would have perished. Let this be your warning, or else Pun, the cruel winter, will conquer all things and ice and snow will cover the earth forever."

This traditional Passamaquoddy story may be a recounting of the end of the ice age, and the retreat of the great glacier that once covered Maine. The earliest archaeological evidence for the presence of people in Maine dates to shortly after the ice sheet retreated- when Nipon was freed from the grasp of Pun by the warm winds of the south.

-Julia Clark, Abbe Museum Curator of Collections

Adapted from a story told by Sopiel Selmore, Passamaquoddy

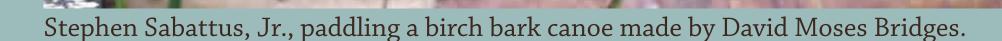
Kcicihtomuwakon Asitihiw

in the past knowledge

Traditional Passamaquoddy stories are handed down orally from generation to generation, and to me, this is a more accurate account of our past than the accounts of scientists. For me, my ancestral roots run deep here and of that I am proud.

Life in the very early days was not always simple. It changed as the environment and the features of the land changed. In order to survive, the Passamaquoddy experienced cultural changes since the beginning of time.

> -Donald Soctomah Passamaquoddy Tribal Historic Preservation Department





There are many ways of knowing about the past.

Who makes history and who gets to write it, retell it and keep it? These questions are important and were considered during the archaeological, cultural, and geological investigations conducted around the EPA's clean-up of the site at N'tolonapemk.

How do we know the past? We know the past from written works, archaeological reconstructions, and geological interpretations. We also know the past from unwritten histories told by grandparents and parents to children, down through the years. In this case, the Passamaquoddy people have shared their history and their story of N'tolonapemk. These multiple perspectives enrich all of our personal and collective understanding of people of the past. We see generations of Native peoples at N'tolonapemk over many thousands of years as sharing common human experiences - not unlike contemporary experiences with family, work and community.

Archaeology is about people, and having the descendants of the people whose lives are being studied take part in the investigation is powerful and enriching.

The investigations at N'tolonapemk incorporated Native voice and Native participation at many levels. All the ways of knowing the past are combined here - archaeology, cultural knowledge, oral history, geology and other natural sciences, to provide us all with a rich and complex history of our collective human past.

-Ellen Cowie, Project Archaeologist

Nutalket digger, archaeologist

Archaeologists focus on the extraction of evidence from physical objects and features, such as fire hearths, in the ground. We interpret past cultures through what people left behind. Unless there is compelling evidence to the contrary, when material culture styles change dramatically, and other evidence of behavior such as burial patterns, trade patterns, and raw material uses change over a short period of time (ten to a hundred years, or less), archaeologists assume that culture has changed. Culture may change as people exchange ideas and technology, migrate, die out, and replace each other across the landscape over time. We can test for biological continuity in a population across time and space, including the use of ancient DNA extracted from human bone. But such biological evidence of who was here is very

scarce in the Northeast. If you ask archaeologists, some would say that the Passamaquoddy or their ancestors have been here for 2,000 or perhaps 3,000 years. We think that the people here before that were a different culture, and probably spoke an unrelated language. We do not know if the early (Archaic Period) people who used the N'tolonapemk site have any direct, close descendants living today in the Northeast or elsewhere in North America.

Working together

The Meddybemps project is an example of what can be done when people work together, as it incorporates science with Native knowledge. Here was an ancient village of the Passamaquoddy tribe engulfed in layers of hazardous waste; as a result, the site received the attention of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and a Superfund designation. For many years, the tribal voice was not heard. Now, the voices for a clean environment on the Dennys River and Meddybemps Lake have been heard and action has been taken to return the

site to its natural setting. The EPA and its contractors are

to be commended for the cleanup of this site, working



Passamaquoddy children helping sort through sifted soil at N'tolonapemk.

hand in hand with the Passamaquoddy government for the recovery and respectful treatment of the artifacts.

The future of the N'tolonapemk Site is very important to the Passamaquoddy people. Tribal people need to be involved in archaeology, so we can have a voice and control in the ground work while we look for links to our past. The tribal people who were involved in this project say it is very important to stay involved, especially to continue this time of cultural healing with our artifacts and traditions.

-Donald Soctomah Passamaquoddy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

Natalie Dana was young girl going to the Indian Township grammar school; she was excited to go on a field trip to see a nearby archeological project along Meddybemps Lake. She saw Dawn Fitch working at the site with several other



Native people from the communities of Indian Township and Pleasant Point. Dawn was so excited about the work and she talked with Natalie about that passion for love of history.

"I thought about the people who made the stone tools and about how these tools haven't been seen or touched since my ancestors had used them."

"The N'tolonapemk project was the seed that grew to bring together my interest in archaeology combined with the cultural connection I had. Archaeology gives me a sense of the past and the spiritual connection that the ancestors had to this land."

Now Natalie is attending college and majoring in Anthropology/Archaeology. Her future plans are to create an archaeological program for the community with projects for kids to learn from.

"It is important work, I want to be able to tell my ancestors' stories from the archaeological work I do and tell the stories to the next generation."

Wehkewakon implements, tools

The N'tolonapemk artifacts



In 2000, while excavations were still being carried out at N'tolonapemk, the various participants in the project began discussions regarding the artifacts that were being recovered, and how and where they would be cared for once the excavations were completed. The property

owners, the EPA, the State of Maine and the Passamaquoddy Tribe came to an agreement that the N'tolonapemk artifacts would be given to the Abbe Museum, which would care for them in compliance with

federal requirements, museum standards and best practices. It was also decided that if, at some point in the future, the Passamaquoddy Tribe has a facility that meets these federal requirements and museum standards, the collection may be turned over to the Tribe. In the meantime, the Abbe Museum is proud to care for this collection on behalf of the Passamaquoddy people and the state of Maine, while making it accessible to tribal members, researchers and to our visitors through this exhibit.

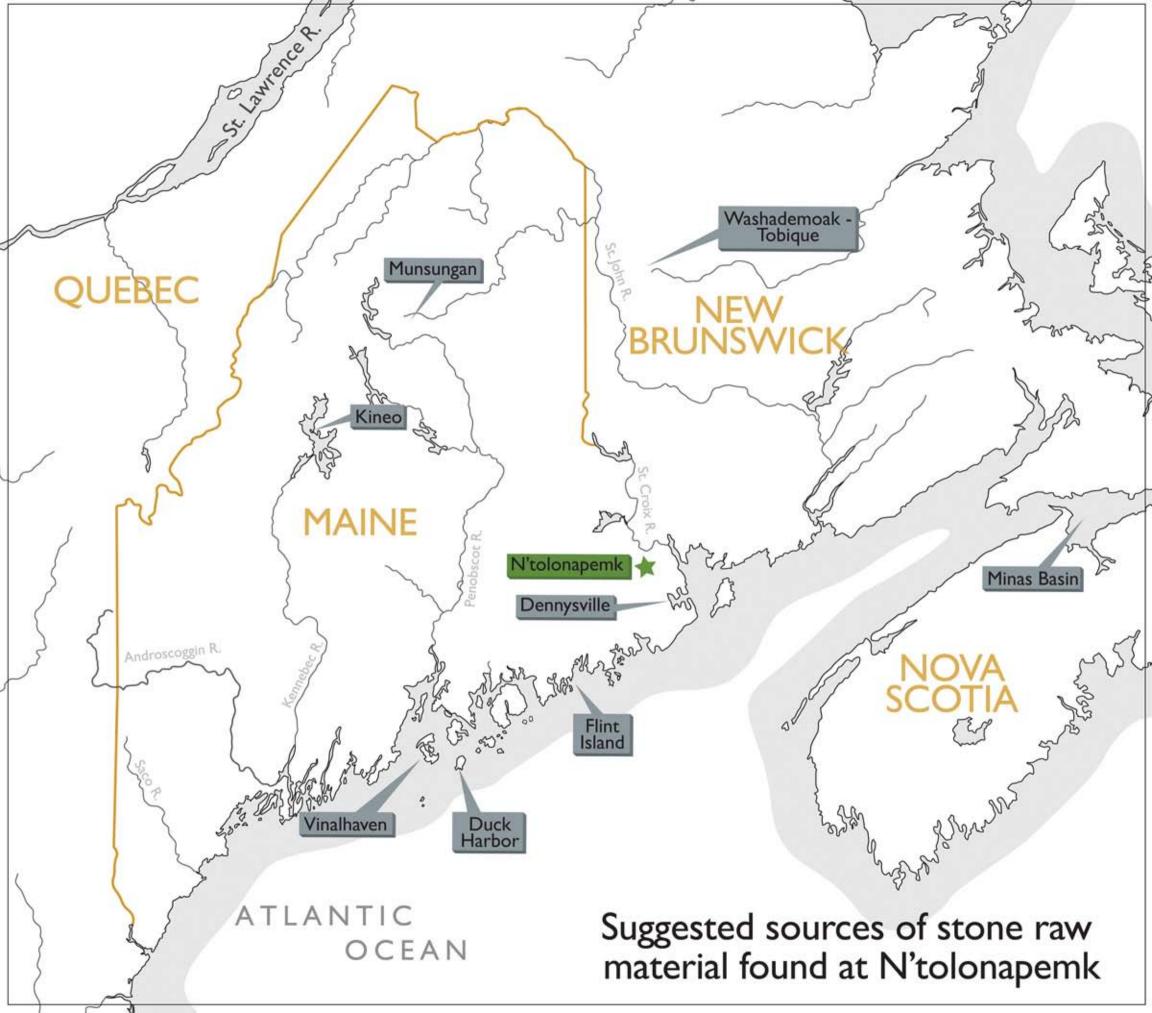
-Julia Clark, Abbe Museum Curator of Collections

Woleyutomuwakon taking good care

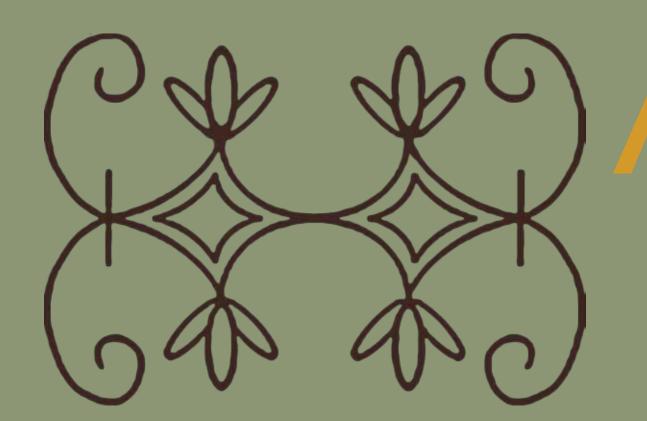


Kisamikasu

it has been stored





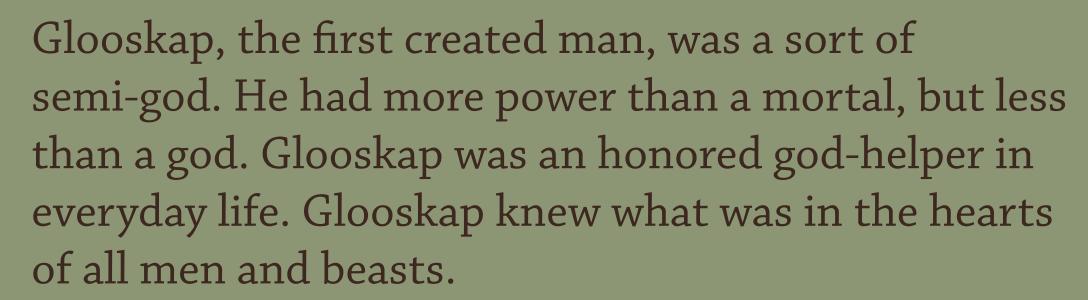


Akonutomak(story, narra

How Glooscap Made the Animals Small

In the beginning, Glooscap, the first man formed all things, said the Elders. All the animals then were the same gigantic size. The lively flea jumped forty miles. This was too fast for the best interests of all concerned. So Glooscap rubbed him down until he became very little. The moose, on the other hand, was not so stupid — he would neither do harm nor be unduly exuberant, so he was rubbed larger. The squirrel ran up a tree so fiercely that he tore it down. He was rubbed smaller. Thus Glooscap rubbed everything larger or smaller according to the nature which it displayed.

Adapted from a story told by Lewis Mitchell, Passamaquoddy, ca. 1910



-from *Pride*, published by
Project Indian Pride
Maine Indian Education
Joseph A. Nicholas & David Francis, 1978

When people first arrived in Maine about 12,000 years ago, they probably shared the landscape with some very large animals, including wooly mammoth and mastodons. The Wabanaki tell several versions of this story in which Glooskap (also spelled Gluskabe and Koluskap) makes the large animals small, in part so that humans can more easily hunt them.

-Julia Clark, Abbe Museum Curator of Collections

Skicinuwatuwewakon Passamaquoddy-Maliseet Language

Throughout this exhibit, you will find words from the Passamaquoddy language. Language is integral to understanding a group of people, their culture and their history. The spellings and translations used in this exhibit come from *A Passamaquoddy-Maliseet Dictionary*, by David A. Francis and Robert M. Leavitt, University of Maine Press, Orono, 2008.

-Julia Clark, Abbe Museum Curator of Collections

For more information about the Passamaquoddy language:

LANDSCAPES, LEGENDS, & LANGUAGE OF THE PASSAMAQUODDY PEOPLE: An Interactive Journey in the Land of the Passamaquoddy, Passamaquoddy Tribal Historic Preservation Office, interactive DVD, 2004.



Passamaquoddy-Maliseet Language Portal pmportal.org

Pemkiskank long ago Sebawonuk

Fourteen thousand years ago a massive ice glacier retreated from the Maine coast, exposing a unique landscape. Since that time, the Passamaquoddy have adapted to the changes in the environment and its resources.

The very foundation of being a Passamaquoddy is related to the use of the waters and the land and adapting, whether hunting or holding religious ceremonies.

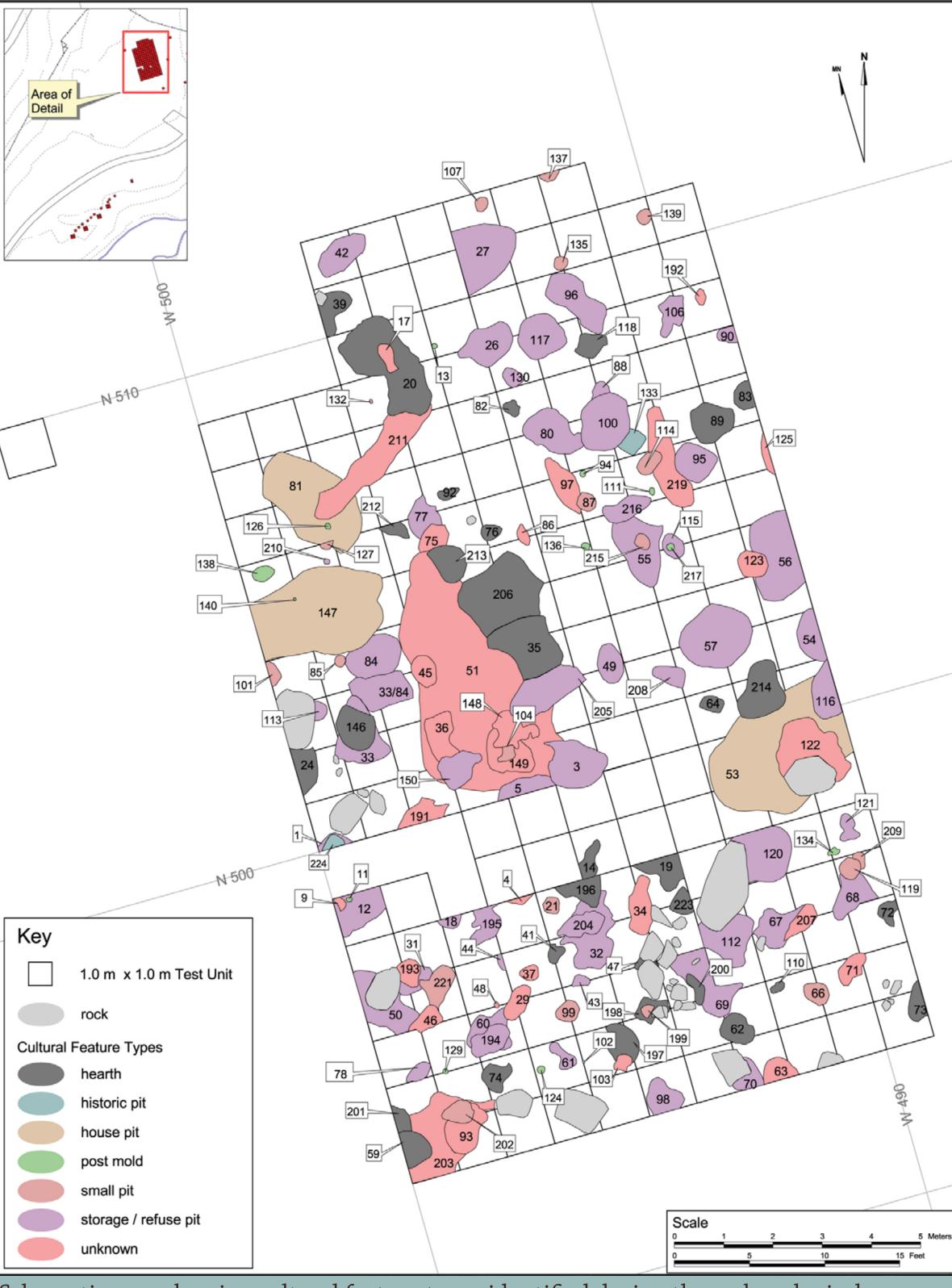
During the last 500 years, the Passamaquoddy have been in confrontation with non-Indian society, which often holds opposing views. As a result, the Tribe is now facing an environmental crisis which threatens the survival of all natural life. Passamaquoddy traditions tell us it is the Tribe's responsibility to defend the natural environment for the survival of the unborn generations.

> -Donald Soctomah, Passamaquoddy **Tribal Historic Preservation Officer**

Elevino

traditions

Time depth & continuity



Schematic map showing cultural feature types identified during the archaeological excavations at N'tolonapemk in 2000.

Archaeological evidence, including radiocarbon dates from cultural features, suggests that the earliest record of human occupation at N'tolonapemk is represented by a suite of artifacts typical of the Early Archaic period (8,600-8,200 years ago). The artifacts show that people occupying the site around 8,600 years ago were typical among Native American communities in the Gulf of Maine region at that time. There may have been earlier occupations at this location, but artifacts and features pre-dating the Early Archaic period were not found.

Archaeological evidence indicates that the Early Archaic period occupation ended about 8,200 years ago, and the site was apparently abandoned for about 1,700 years. This site abandonment is likely related to climatic change which caused lower water levels in Meddybemps Lake, leading to the failure of the annual alewife fish run. Beginning about 6,500 years ago, occupation at N'tolonapemk resumed and would continue on intermittently through the Late Ceramic period (950 to 400 years ago) until the arrival of Europeans in the region and a mill and dam were built at the site.

Imagine a family, or several families, camping at the same location for multiple generations.

The long-term use of N'tolonapemk has made the archaeological interpretation of the site very complicated. Imagine a family, or several families, camping at the same location for multiple generations. Then, descendants of those families repeating this pattern over and over in the same general location – building shelters, making camp fires, digging holes for underground storage, and dumping waste nearby. The repeated human use of this site created a complex mosaic of archaeological evidence, so rich in information about the past, but also complicated to reconstruct or unravel - like several puzzles thrown together with no real sense of the many "pictures" represented. With careful analysis, archaeologists were able to decipher the archaeological remains and reconstruct an amazing history of Passamaquoddy life at this popular setting on Meddybemps Lake.

The long-term continuity reflected in the subsistence (food getting) strategies and the strong sense of place for the people who lived here is powerful when compared with the pronounced technological and material changes over time, reflecting the complexity of human social interactions.

-Ellen Cowie, Project Archaeologist

hearth, fire pit

What is a feature?

Some of the most exciting finds at N'tolonapemk are what archaeologists call "features." Features are "architectural" anomalies preserved in the ground, often evidenced by different soil color or

texture, arrangements of stones, or concentrations of artifacts. These alterations to the natural soil may represent a place where a campfire was made, or a place where someone dug a hole in the ground. A range of feature types were identified at N'tolonapemk, such as hearths, house floors, storage pits and refuse pits. These features help us understand the kinds of activities people engaged in and, together with the material in them, are like time capsules that inform us about the Early Archaic pe past. Over 200 cultural features were identified at N'tolonapemk, a relatively high concentration compared to many sites around Maine.

dwelling, house

The N'tolonapemk site was used as a seasonal campground beginning almost 9,000 years ago, but use of the site has not been continuous. For example, there is little evidence of use of the site during the period between about 3,900 and 3,200 years ago, when an archaeological culture, the Susquehanna Tradition, occupied most of the east coast from the Savannah River in Georgia to Montreal and St. John, New Brunswick. Archaeological evidence indicates use of the site just before European arrival, but curiously, there were no trade items recovered at the site, or other evidence of interactions between Passamaquoddies and Europeans through the 1600s and 1700s, at least in the areas that were excavated.

There is evidence of continuity in some of the food-getting activities at the site during the 8,000 years. The

bones of small fish are most common, numbering in the tens of thousands. A focus on harvesting spring alewife (river herring) runs was found during all periods of occupation at N'tolonapemk. The people of all time periods who camped here also trapped eel, beaver, muskrat and turtle. Gathering nuts and fruit (such as blackberries) was also a common activity across the millennia.



-Arthur Spiess, Senior Archaeologist **Maine Historic Preservation Commission**

An archaeological culture is defined by patterns of artifacts and other aspects of material cultured found in archaeological sites, and how these patterns change or stay the same through time and across space. These archaeological cultures may or may not reflect past human groups as defined by the people at that time.

In 1996 the site was declared a Superfund Site, and a federally funded cleanup effort was undertaken by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Mocobekentun he or she

Why was N'tolonapemk excavated?

N'tolonapemk has a long Native American history, and an interesting Euroamerican history including 250 years of industry, commerce, farming and settlement. Unfortunately, the most recent history of the site was its use by the Eastern Surplus Company, a salvage yard specializing in military surplus. In its 50 years of operation from the 1940s to the 1990s,

to be seriously contaminated. The problem was so extremely that in 1996 the site was declared a Superfund Site, and federally funded cleanup effort was undertaken by the Environmental Protection Agency. Monitoring of ground

hazardous and highly toxic waste stored there caused the site to be seriously contaminated. The problem was so extreme that in 1996 the site was declared a Superfund Site, and a Environmental Protection Agency. Monitoring of ground water contamination at the site continues today. Nehbahtuwik

Excavations at N'tolonapemk, 2000. Photo courtesy Northeast Archaeology Research Center,

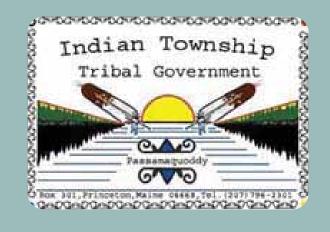
The cleanup involved removal of contaminated soil, drilling wells to treat ground water, constructing buildings, and other ground-disturbing activities that jeopardized the archaeological evidence preserved beneath the salvage yard.

A law protecting cultural resources called the National Historic Preservation Act (1966) required that the unavoidable adverse effects of the cleanup operation be mitigated through archaeological investigations of a non-hazardous portion of the site. Large scale excavations were carried out at the site in 2000 and 2001, with over 220 square meters carefully excavated, providing a wealth of information about life at N'tolonapemk over thousands of years.

-from N'tolonapemk: An Ancient Native American Village on Meddybemps Lake, Maine

Archaeology at N'tolonopemk was conducted by the University of Maine at Farmington Archaeology Research Center with funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in cooperation with the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

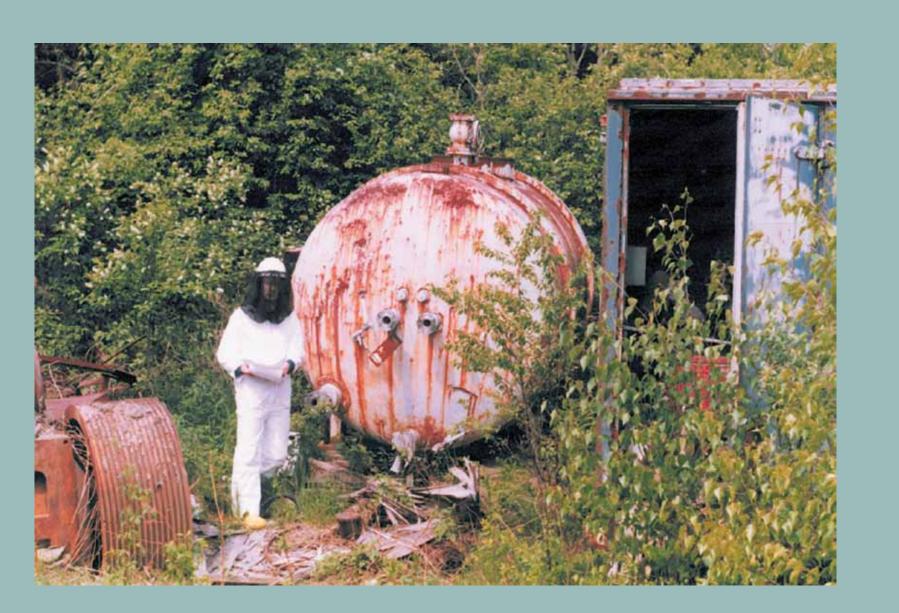
















Peskotomuhkatik Passamaquoddy territory

CALAIS

MEDDYBEMPS LAKE

N'TOLONAPEMK

CANADA

CANADIAN BORDER

PLEASANT POINT

INDIAN RESERVATION

Map by Danielle Meier

PASSAMAQUODDY B

ST. CROIX RIVER

DENNYSVILLE

Indian township

MEDDYBEMPS HEATH

MACHIAS

STONY BROOK

DENNYS RIVER

Waponahkik the land of the

allow better access to fish.

the land of the Wabanaki

Meddybemps Lake is at the center of traditional Passamaquoddy land. Its significance to us is unmeasurable. Life depended on the annual run of fish though the rivers to the lakes. Spring villages were set up at the river outlets and waterfalls to

-Donald Soctomah, Passamaquoddy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

Meddybemps Meddybemps

The place



N'tolonapemk site seen from the air.

Photo courtesy of Northeast Archaeology Research Center,

The location of N'tolonapemk at the outlet of Meddybemps Lake is a very rich environment - a setting that provided much of what people needed to live. It is also located at a strategic crossroads of long-used travel routes. Native peoples traveled from N'tolonapemk down the Dennys River to the coast, or up Stony Brook to

Kethonosk Dennys River

the St. Croix River and on to inland regions. The artifacts found at the site reveal the journeys people took from N'tolonapemk to obtain stone material for tools and other raw materials not available locally.

Dennys River down the Dennys River 4,500 years ago to the coast to fish for swordfish and quarry stone to make tools. Several pieces of swordfish

bone found at N'tolonpemk were probably brought back from the coast with which to make tools, along with a stone called Flint Island rhyolite that came from the area around Narraguagus Bay, southwest of Machias. We know that people from N'tolonapemk traded for material from as far away as present-day New York and Quebec, and with other Native communities to the east in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. We see stone from these areas preserved in the archaeological site, and we can imagine that other resources like food, exotic feathers, and tobacco were traded and brought back to N'tolonapemk as well.

-Ellen Cowie, Project Archaeologist

The N'tolonapemk site was a crossroads on a system of waterways connecting interior and coastal downeast Maine to places further east, north and west/south.

Although there is some argument among archaeologists, the people of the Archaic period (9,000-4,000 years ago) apparently used dugout canoes, rather than birch bark canoes. We suspect that the birchbark canoe was invented or developed around 3,000 to 2,500 years ago. This conclusion is based in part on the fact that there are many gouges, axes and adzes, tools for heavy woodworking, in Archaic period sites, but few of them in the Ceramic period sites (3,000-500 years ago). Ceramic period birch bark canoe building tools probably included endscrapers (whittling), beaver tooth knives set in antler handles (draw knives), and small stone wedges for splitting light pieces of wood (such as cedar canoe ribs).

Walsoktahasik
dug-out canoe

So, for people during the Archaic, N'tolonapemk would have been a spot where dugout canoes were stored, for use on the lake. They probably walked a land trail network between the N'tolonapemk site and their campsites on the coast, where larger dugout canoes were stored for use on salt water. Then, during the last couple of thousand years, the Passamquoddy and their ancestors easily and rapidly traveled to and from the location in birchbark canoes.



Masqewuloq birch bark canoe

Photo courtesy of Donald Soctoma

A Strong Sense of Place

The Passamaquoddy people and their ancestors lived at N'tolonapemk for thousands of years. This strong relationship between people and their landscape is an amazing reflection of the strong sense of place among the Passamaquoddy people.

Where does your "place" take you and your family? Is it a place visited over and over? The ocean, a certain spot along a river, or a special mountain top overlook, dinner with family at the kitchen table? Or maybe a special place in your community park. All families and communities share a sense of place. The Passamaquoddy at N'tolonapemk certainly have a deep connection to this place at the outlet of Meddybemps Lake.

-Ellen Cowie, Project Archaeologist

Do you have a place that is especially important to you or your family? Share your connection to a special place by marking it on one of the maps with the pins provided below.

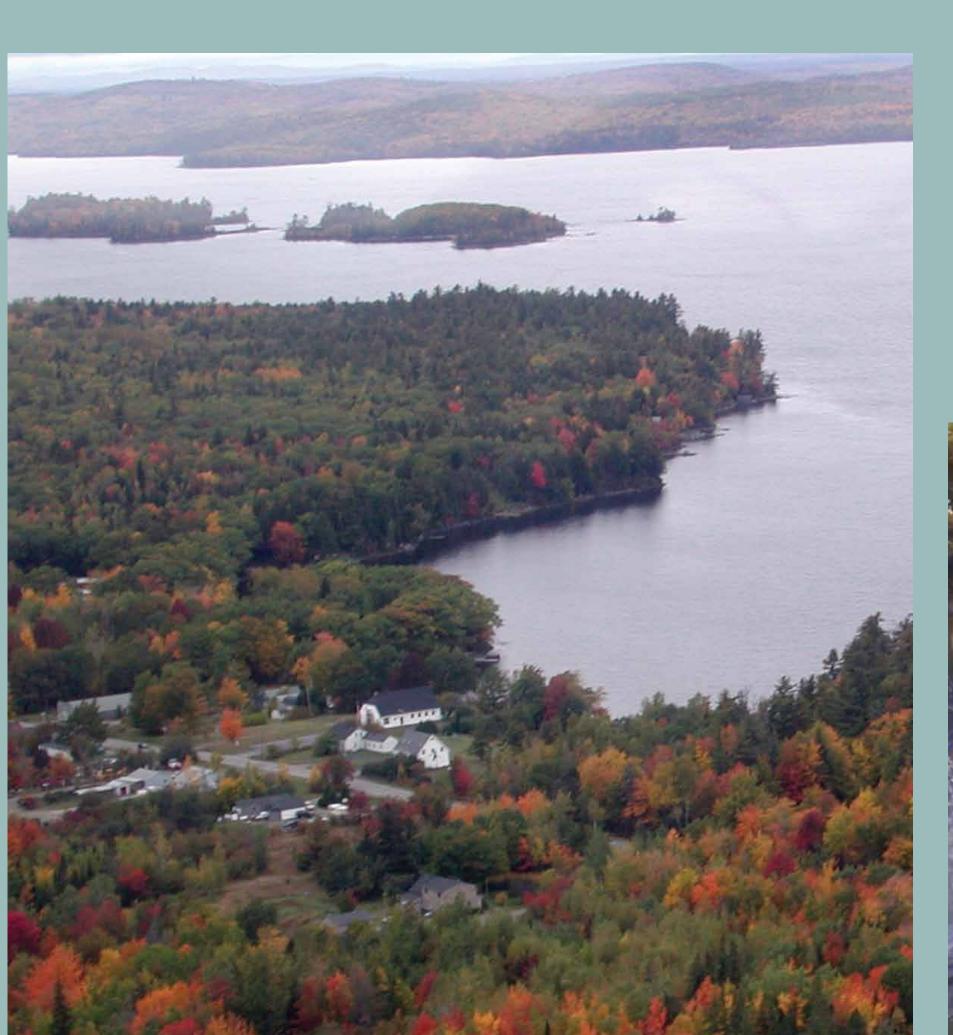






The environment

The Passamaquoddy have always respected the ocean, rivers and land. Many stories have evolved from this respect through the years. Along the Passamaquoddy Bay, the forces of nature are shown through the power of the ocean. In Lubec, you can see the ocean water in the bay flowing into the Atlantic. With this view, you can understand why the ocean hunters would stop at this point to carry their canoe around this section of water. This is the home of the world's largest whirlpool. It's so deep and powerful it seems as though it could take you to the center of the earth.





-Donald Soctomah, Passamaquoddy Tribal **Historic Preservation Officer**





Alewife (Alosa pseudoharengus)



One of the parts of a changing environment that archaeologists can reconstruct is changing vegetation (trees and plants). The environment around N'tolonapemk can be reconstructed from wood and seed charcoal and animal bones left by the people who camped there, as well as geological information from the lake bottom (sediments and pollen).

The earliest occupants (roughly 8,000 years ago) were living in a conifer (fir, spruce) dominated mixed forest with a substantial amount of beech, birch and maple. By about 4,000 years ago, the forest around the site had shifted to more hardwoods and less conifers, a forest type that continued through the beginning of the Ceramic period (until about 2,000 years ago). Regional environmental reconstructions show the development of a spruce forest between N'tolonapemk and the coast beginning 2,000 years ago. Acorns and hazelnuts were commonly collected and used for food before 4,000 years ago, while beechnuts were more common during the last 3,000 years.





beechnut



The Passamaquoddy have always respected the ocean, rivers and land. Cobscook Bay Photo courtesy of Donald Soctomah

The setting of N'tolonapemk is notable for its strategic location near the outlet of Meddybemps Lake at the beginning of the Dennys River. The nearby Meddybemps Heath, Staples Fen and numerous other wetlands and forests provided a wealth of animal and plant resources for Native Americans living at the site. The site is also situated at an important travel nexus connecting coastal

regions around Passamaquoddy Bay to the interior via the St. Croix River and beyond. Analysis of burned animal bones and burned plant remains recovered

Kotunotansu

he or she hunts

from the many hearth and pit features excavated at the site suggest the Native people living at N'tolonapemk practiced a hunter/fisher/gatherer subsistence strategy, utilizing a broad spectrum of plants and animals from

the surrounding wetlands, forests and the adjacent river and lake. Perhaps most importantly, from the earliest occupation of the site, there was always a focus on the spring alewife run.

The importance of the alewife fishery to the community at N'tolonapemk is further confirmed with the information gained through paleohydrological

research (the study of water and its role in geological change and past environments) associated with the archaeological and cultural investigations at N'tolonapemk. This research documented long-term climatological change that resulted in lower lake levels which affected the viability of the alewife run.

-Ellen Cowie, Project Archaeologist

alewife, the fish

Sigonomeg



The animal bones found at the site reflect some environmental changes as well. Among the large mammals, moose were more commonly hunted during the earliest occupation of the site, and again during the last 1,000 years. Deer were the more commonly hunted large mammal during the thousands of years between. Caribou were also hunted during the last 1,000 years. Moose and caribou prefer the conifer-dominated forest, while deer thrive in mixed forest with more hardwood and nut trees.

hazelnut



The seasons





spring

summer

winter

The archaeological record at N'tolonapemk shows multi-season occupation at the site over the 8,000 years of its use. Archaeologists use a range of techniques to determine when people lived at a particular spot. Plant and animal remains, in particular, can be used as "seasonality indicators." We know the site's location at the outlet of the lake and the presence of the alewife runs likely made it a very busy place in

he or she picks or gathers berries

MUWISU

the spring during the fish run. Analysis of other food remains – bone and plant fragments – reveal evidence of summer (berries - blueberry, elderberry, raspberry and blackberry) and fall (nutshell acorn, beechnut, hazelnut) occupation. Winter occupation is not confirmed through archaeological evidence but may have occurred at the site as well.

takes place from about mid-May through mid-June. Everyone in the community likely had a hand in the fishing place success of this fish harvest. Large quantities of food would be captured,

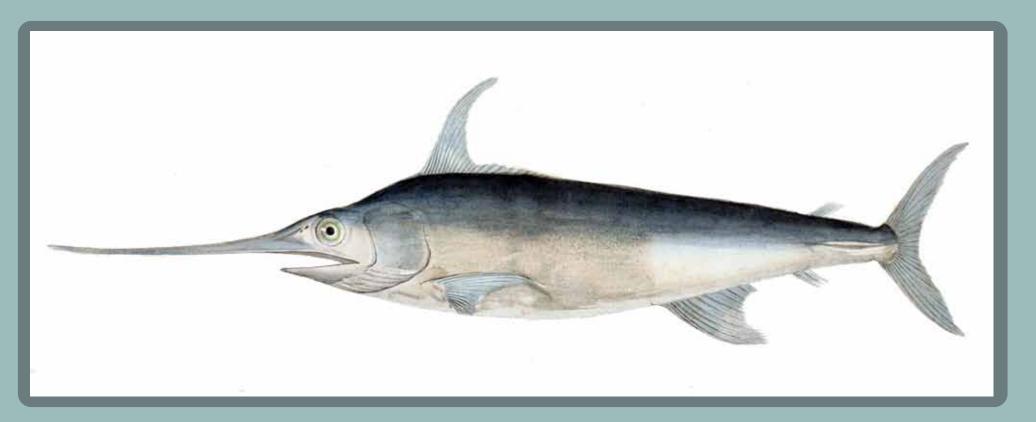
representing a very important part of the overall diet during the spring and summer months. Net making, fish netting, fish processing and storage all had to take place over a short period of time. This group or cooperative family activity was taking place at N'tolonapemk thousands of years ago.

Imagine the spring alewife run, which

-Ellen Cowie, Project Archaeologist



Maine blueberries Photo by Renée Johnson, Moon Hill Farm



swordfish





muskrat



Archaeological evidence can be read to reconstruct patterns of seasonal life at N'tolonapemk. For much or all of the time that people camped at the site, spring and early summer were a major focus of activity, harvesting fish from the river and lake, including alewife and sucker. Some fishing in the lake outlet for eel occurred during the fall, also across the span of millennia. Mammal hunting and trapping (beaver, muskrat, deer and moose) may have been a late fall and winter activity, with perhaps fewer people camped at the site during the cold season.

Archaeologists have evidence that 5,000-4,000 years ago, at least some people who came to N'tolonapemk to harvest spring alewives left the site during the summer months. Pits and fire hearths from this time period contain scraps of swordfish sword, a bone material used to make spear and harpoon heads by people living on the coast of Maine during the Late Archaic period. Native hunters would have harvested swordfish when the large fish came inshore in the Gulf of Maine during the warm weather and warm water months of summer. When they returned to N'tolonapemk, they brought some of the swordfish sword (bone) with them.



Ponapsa rock, stone

The geology

IUDGAN
earth, soil, dirt

LONTO quantity fresh water

Pqom ice

Like the fascinating history of N'tolonapemk and its people, the geology of the region has an interesting story to tell. We can see climate change today and its effects on people - hot temperatures, drought in some regions, melting of polar ice. Through paleohydrological research (the study of water and its role in geological change and past environments),

we know that climatic changes over the last 12,000 years also affected the flow and level of water at Meddybemps Lake. After the retreat of glacial ice which capped the northern portion of the continent, the land was depressed, lower than its current position. Like a spring slow to rebound, it took several thousand years for the land in Maine to come back

Climatic changes over the last 12,000 years affected the flow and level of water at Meddybemps Lake.

after being held down by the weight of glacial ice. At Meddybemps Lake, this meant that the outlet of the lake was at its northern shore at Stony Brook. Sometime around 8,600 years ago, the outlet switched to Dennys River at the southern end of the lake. With the shift in direction of the lake outlet, the site at N'tolonapemk became a prime location for human settlement. Another significant climatic event around 8,200 years ago caused the water levels to go

Elkiskahk weather, climate

so low that the lake became a stagnant pond with no outlet, bringing a temporary stop to the spring alewife run into the lake. This corresponds with the archaeological evidence that the community at N'tolonapemk abandoned the site during this period of very low lake levels. Native peoples returned to N'tolonapemk when lake levels rose and the Dennys River and its annual fish runs became active again.

Where did the Native peoples go who had long settled at N'tolonapemk during this dry period? Likely they found another spot to camp among the many other river and lake settings in the traditional homeland of the Passamaquoddy.



-Ellen Cowie, Project Archaeologist

Paleohydrology and Climate Change at Meddybemps Lake



Geologists recording a sediment core from Meddybemps Lake. Photo courtesy of Northeast Archaeology Research Center, Inc.

Paleohyrodological research at Meddybemps
Lake, carried out as part of the archaeological
investigations at N'tolonapemk, looked at
evidence of changing lake levels to
reconstruct both the changing nature of the
lake itself and environmental change in the
region.

Geologists participating in the research at N'tolonapemk took several lake-bottom sediment cores from a sheltered cove at the northern end of the lake. They then analyzed the plant remains contained in the sediment to reconstruct changing water levels in the

lake. When the sediment in the cores contained fragments of plants more common in deep water, the sediment was deposited at times when the lake level was at or higher than its current

level. When the sediment in the cores contained fragments of plants more common in shallow water or the shoreline, the sediment was deposited at times when the lake level was lower than it is today. Radiocarbon dating of plant samples was then used to determine the time periods for high, low and changing lake levels.

Militome

the body of water is deep in some places and shallow in others



The Laurentide ice sheet 18,000 years ago.

Photo courtesy of www.americanroads.us.

Samagan water

> Ekcahak sediment

From:

The Late-Glacial Environment and Holocene Evolution of Archaeological Site 96.02, Meddybemps Lake, Eastern Maine, USA, by Christopher Dorion, 2002. The Holocene Paleohydrology of Meddybemps Lake, Eastern Maine, USA, by Christopher Dorion and Ann Dieffenbacher-Krall, 2001.

paleo-: ancient, prehistoric, old

[from Greek palaios old]

hydro-: water

[from Greek, combining form of hýdor water]

-logy: indicating the science or study of

[from Latin -logia, from Greek, from logos word]

This information, combined with what we know about changes to the land that occurred as the last ice sheet retreated about 13,000 years ago, allowed geologists to reconstruct an interesting geological and environmental history of Meddybemps Lake.

18,000 years ago Glacial ice begins to melt.

12,000-11,000 years ago

13,000 years ago The ocean covers much of coastal and central Maine, a

result of both increased water in the oceans from melting ice sheets, and pressure from the weight of the ice sheet having pushed the land down; higher landforms around

the lake form numerous islands in an ice-choked bay.

The sea retreats, but the pressure from the retreating ice sheet has left the area around the lake sloped down towards the north and west (compared to today), and the lake drains through Stony Brook into the St. Croix River.

9,000 years agoThe land around the lake has finally rebounded from the

weight of the ice, and the lake begins to drain into the Dennys River, as it does today.

Dellity britter, ab it abes to aay.

8,000-6,300 years ago A warmer, drier climate leads to much lower water levels in the lake, and the lake becomes too

low to drain at all, and water stopped flowing

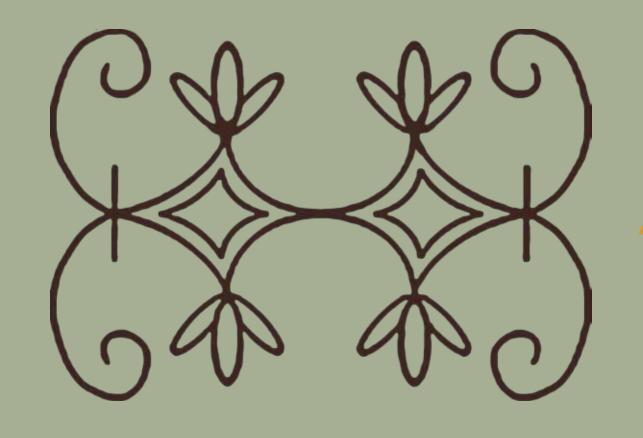
from the lake into the Dennys River

6,300 years agoThe climate becomes wetter, and the lake level begins rising, re-establishing the outlet into the

Dennys River.

3,000 years ago The lake reaches, and stays at or near, the current

water levels.



Akonutomakon story, narrative

The Wind Bird

The Indians believe in a great bird. They call him Wocawson, the storm causer, or wind causer. He lives in the far north, sitting upon a great rock at the end of the sky. Whenever he moves, the wind blows.

When Koluskap was still living among men, he would go out alone in his canoe to hunt birds with bow and arrows. Once when he was out in his canoe, Wocawson began to blow a strong wind, and the wind blew every day. It got more and more windy, until finally there was a gale. Koluskap could no longer go out in his canoe. He said, "Wocawson, the great bird who lives in the north, he is doing this."

So Koluskap set out to seek Wocawson. He traveled very far and found him sitting on a big rock, a great white bird. He said to him, "Grandfather, you have no mercy on your children. You have made evil weather here, storms. You move your wings a little too much." Wocawson, the great bird, answered,

"I have been here a very long time. In the old days before anyone spoke, I was heard first. My wings moved first. I will move them as I like."

Koluskap rose up. His power whirled up to the clouds. He took the great bird, as if he were only a duck, and tied his wings together, throwing him down where there is a split between two great rocks. Then he left him there.

Now the Indians could go out in their canoes all day long. It was always calm, for many days, many weeks, many months. Eventually the water in the lakes became stagnant. It was so thick that Koluskap could not manage his canoe.

Koluskap remembered the great bird, and went to see him again. He found the immortal Wocawson where he had left him. Koluskap lifted him up and put him again on the rock. He loosened one of Wocawson's wings. From that day on the wind never blew as it had of old.



Adapted from a story told by Lewis Mitchell, ca. 1911, recorded by John Dyneley Prince

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Learn more about N'tolonapemk



N'tolonapemk: Our Relatives Place DVD

Passamaquoddy Tribal Historic Preservation Office, 2006



A Visit to Our Ancestors' Place

Donald Soctomah, Passamaquoddy Tribal Historic Preservation Office, 2005



US Environmental Protection Agency Project information website

Learn more about the Passamaquoddy



Indian Township (Motahkomikuk)
Tribal website
www.passamaquoddy.com



Passamaquoddy Cultural Heritage Museum Facebook page



Pleasant Point (Sipayik)
Tribal website
www.wabanaki.com



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Abbe Museum abbemuseum.org

Archaeological Time Periods

In Northern New England, archaeologists divide Native American history prior to the arrival of Europeans into several time periods, reflecting major shifts in peoples' way of life. Changes in tool technology, ways of getting food, and settlement patterns are a few of the factors archaeologists use to define these time periods.



The Paleoindian Period (12,000-9,000 years ago)

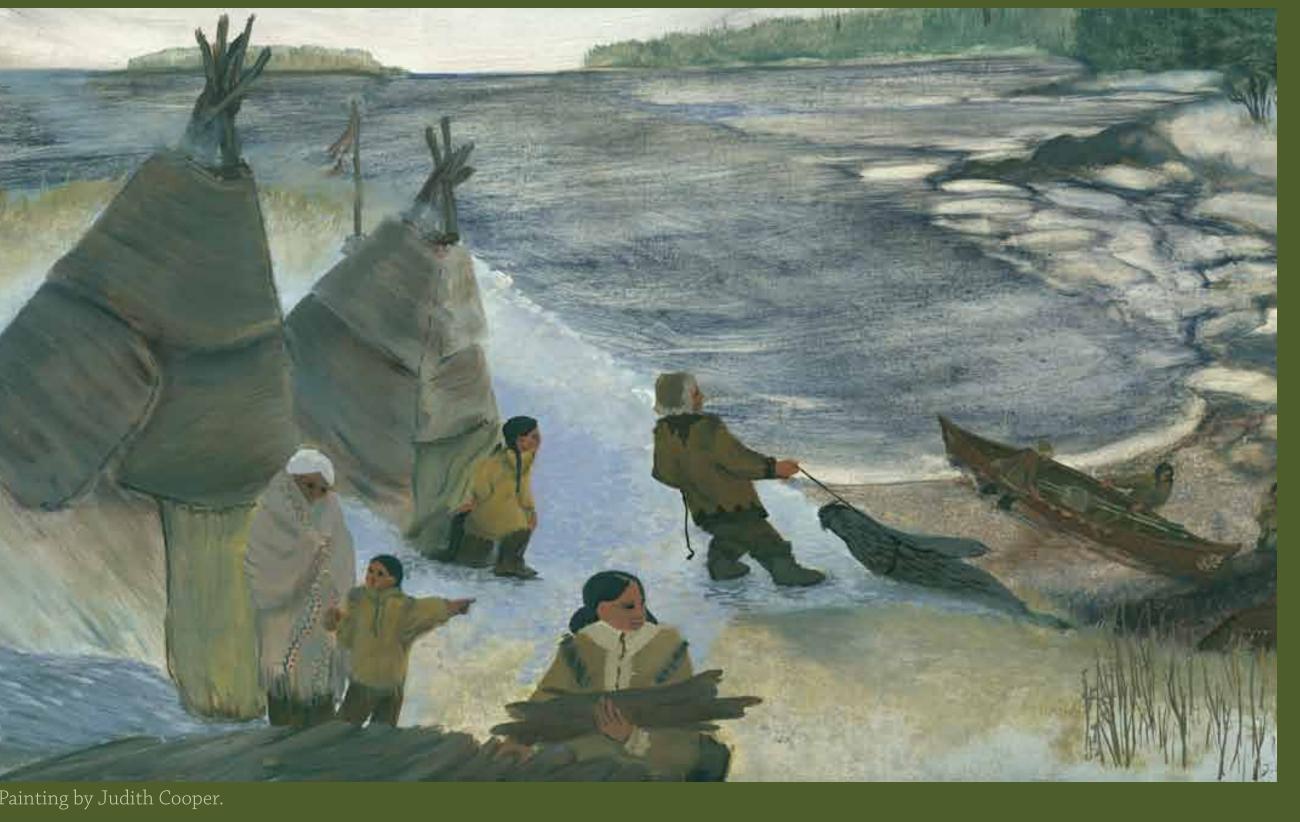
Kancoqivery old, ancient

People moved into northeastern North America and Maine about 11,500 years ago, after the Laurentide Ice Sheet receded at the end of the last ice age. They lived in a tundra-like environment, much colder and drier than today. Small groups traveled extensively in pursuit of caribou and other animals. Specific types of stone were used to make beautifully crafted "fluted" spear points. The Paleoindian tool kit included spear points, stone drills and stone scraping tools, and undoubtedly other items not made of stone, which have not survived in Maine's acidic soils.



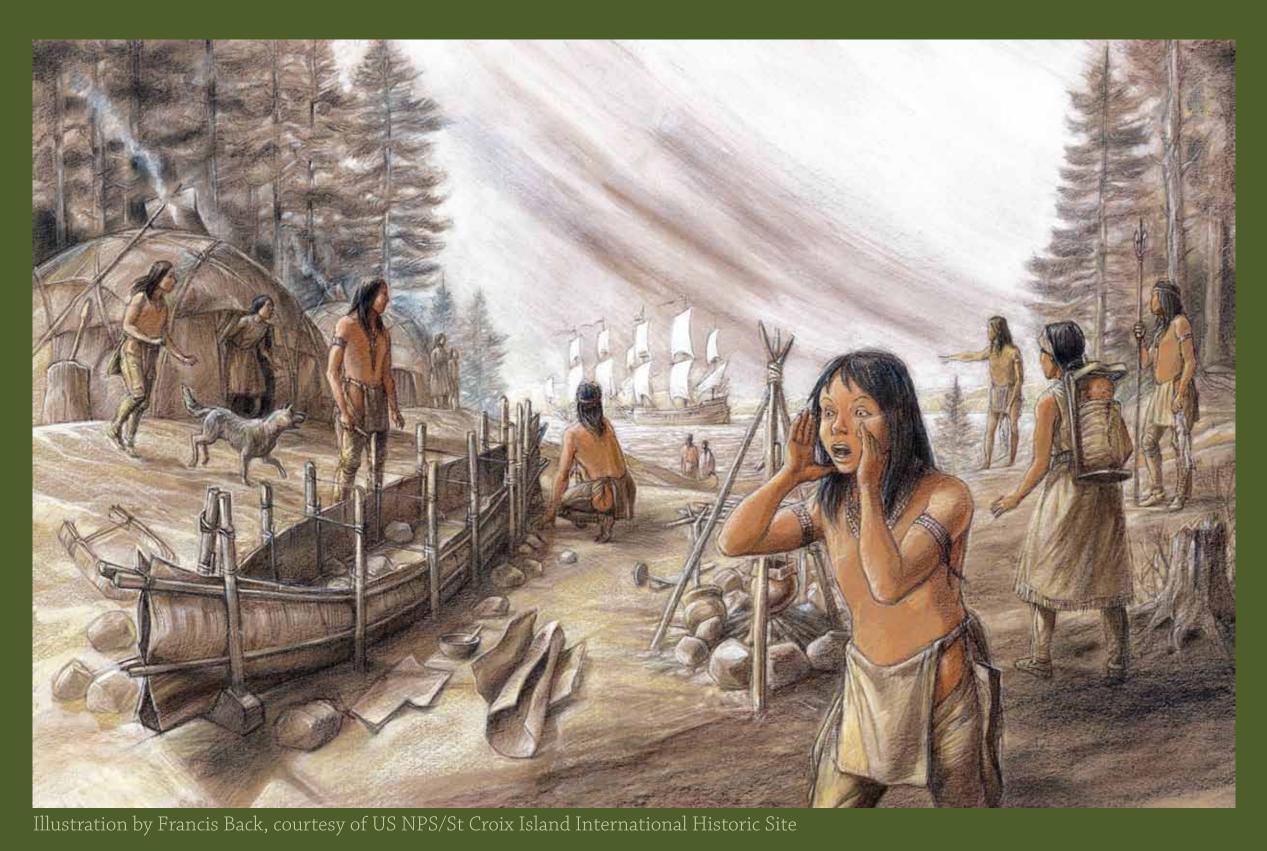
The Archaic Period (9,000-3,000 years ago) *Kaneyawiw it is archaic**

As the environment changed to dense forests and more temperate conditions somewhat warmer than today, Native Americans adapted and thrived. They learned to use new raw materials, plants and animals available for food, clothing, tools and shelter. Specialized stone tools for wood working such as axes, adzes and gouges were made, and appear to have been prized possessions. The dugout canoe, hewn from a single, large tree, was developed for river, lake and ocean fishing and travel. Native Americans utilized the abundant resources locally available to them - hunting and trapping moose, deer, beaver, otter, muskrat, bear, birds, fish, and reptiles and gathering a large variety of plants and nuts. Elaborate burial practices during this time reflect a rich spiritual life.



The Ceramic Period (3,000-500 years ago) Qahqolunsqey clay pot

Native Americans in Maine began making and using clay pots, a technology passed along by people from the south and west. The bow and arrow were developed, and birch bark canoes replaced the dugout. Waterways throughout the region provided food and other resources, travel routes and settlement locations, as they had during the Archaic period, but people settled in larger villages along major rivers and the coast during the later part of the Ceramic period. There is archaeological evidence for more intensive hunting of some species along the coast, especially seals. There is also evidence of an increase in regional trade, including stone for making tools, and probably food and other raw materials. In southwestern Maine, Native people adopted the cultivation of corn and beans from neighbors further to the south and west, supplementing the traditional diet of wild animals and plants.



The Contact Period (A.D. 1550-1750) Astuwi moving toward each other, coming into contact with each other, face-to-face

By the early 1600s, the lives of Native Americans were dramatically altered with the arrival of Europeans. Interactions between Europeans and Native Americans resulted in changes in Native economies, technologies, settlement patterns, demographics and religion. Native people traded furs (mostly beaver pelts) for many European items such as iron tools, copper kettles and glass beads. In many ways, Europeans also learned from Native Americans how to survive in a world that was new to them. One of the tragic consequences of contact was a high death toll due to smallpox and other European diseases, to which Native Americans had no immunity. In some parts of the Northeast, up to 90% of the Native population died during the first few decades following contact.