

Historical Facts of Glen Cove Burial Site (SOL - 236)

The Glen Cove Burial site, according to the archaeological report of April 1988 by the Novato Archeological Resource Service, is at least 3,500 years old or dating back to 1,500 B.C. (3)

This large Native American village site has been known to the archaeological community since 1907, when it was reported by N.C. Nelson, a researcher associated with the University of California at Berkeley.

He reports that, “from the beach, the shell runs back uphill about 120 feet. Rough fragments of artifacts lie on the beach” and the “many skeletons (skulls intact), mortars, pestles, arrow and spear-points have been found” (2).

The occupation of the Glen Cove site, according to the Handbook of North American Indians assigns the area to the Southern Wintuan speaking peoples, also referred to as Patwin, who are represented by several federally recognized Tribes. Cachil Deho Band of Wintun Indians of Colusa is one of these Tribes.

Native culture in the San Francisco Bay Area and the Central Valley indicate a possibly continuous occupation of SOL-236 from about A.D. 400 to about A.D. 1810 (11).

According to Randall Milliken of “A Time Of Little Choice – The Disintegration of Tribal Culture in the San Francisco Bay Area 1769-1810”, linguistic landscape alone indicates “five languages spoken in the vicinity of San Francisco Bay – Costanoan (Ohlone), Bay Miwok, Coast Miwok, Patwin, and Wappo...” (24) and that the “Carquins and the Chupcans [were the] East Bay groups that were still intact by the end of 1805.” (191).

Other tribal references include the Huchiun, Ompin, Habasto, Saclan, Suisuns, Tatcans, Yo-

kuts, Nisenan, Esselen, Yuki, Salinan, Konkow and many, many others (228).

In 1912, L.L. Loud excavated a 40 foot trench toward the western edge of the deposit and reports that “numerous and varied artifacts occur in the interments” including “lumps of red ocher, bird bone beads with constricted waist, bird bone whistle, flat bone needle, bilaterally barbed bone fish spear, bone awl, cut antler tine, notched bone rasp, bear claw, tooth, unworked animal bone, phallic charm stone, plumet charmstone, quartz crystal, concretions and odd stone forms, matting, cord fibers, quill attachments of imbricated feathers, a series of pestles, and sandstone paint slab.”

Another report by Gifford in 1915 states that “Glen Cove lies in a place where access to terrestrial resources and the plant resources of the salt and brackish marshes are as readily available as the shellfish resource. The great variation in the locally exploitable environment has lead to development of a unique cultural deposit” (5).

And again in 1954, Beardsley documented having found “well preserved fragments of twined and coiled textiles, netting, cord, matting and tule fibers. These display both shingling of rectangular Olivella beads and imbrication of feather ornament. Miscellaneous grave goods include cut antler tines and animal or bird bones, viz., a cluster of bird wing bones and articulated sea otter foot, bear teeth and claws, and eagle claws.” He also notes that “among the more prominent traits noted at Glen Cove are the practices of cremation and preinterment burning of the grave pit” (7) and “human burials and cremations will be found if large scale earth moving is undertaken...” (18).