Chapter One:
INTRODUCTION: THE SITE AND THE PROJECT

Huu7ii (DfSh-7)

The major village site of Huu7ii is the centre of the traditional territory of the *Huu7ii7ath* local group, one of the formerly independent political units that amalgamated to form the modern Huu-ay-aht First Nations (St. Claire 1991; Chapter 2). It is located on the northeast shore of Diana Island, a short distance from the modern community of Bamfield (Fig. 1-1). Diana is one of a chain of islands known as the Deer Group, which extends along the eastern edge of Barkley Sound (Fig. 1-2). The Deer Group islands and the adjacent eastern shoreline of Barkley Sound fall within the asserted traditional territory of the Huu-ay-aht First Nations today.

The archaeological site evident at this former village location extends for about 300 m in an east-west direction, from just past a small stream at the western end to a high rock ridge that marks the eastern edge. The area is largely open today, covered by ferns, hemlock seedlings, and scattered large trees. Evidence of recent camping is evident at various points on the site surface. Shell midden deposits marking the earlier village were discerned by probing across this area during the initial site recording in 1984. Toward the back, a row of fairly distinct house platforms extends across most of the site. At least ten, and perhaps 12, houses once stood in this area (Fig. 1-3; Mackie and Williamson 2003). A substantial back midden ridge, ranging up to two metres in height, extends the length of the site along the rear of the houses. Toward the eastern end of the site, a segment of another, presumably older, back ridge stands behind the first. Several of the house locations are quite well demarcated by narrow side midden ridges extending out at right angles from the back ridge, gradually ta-

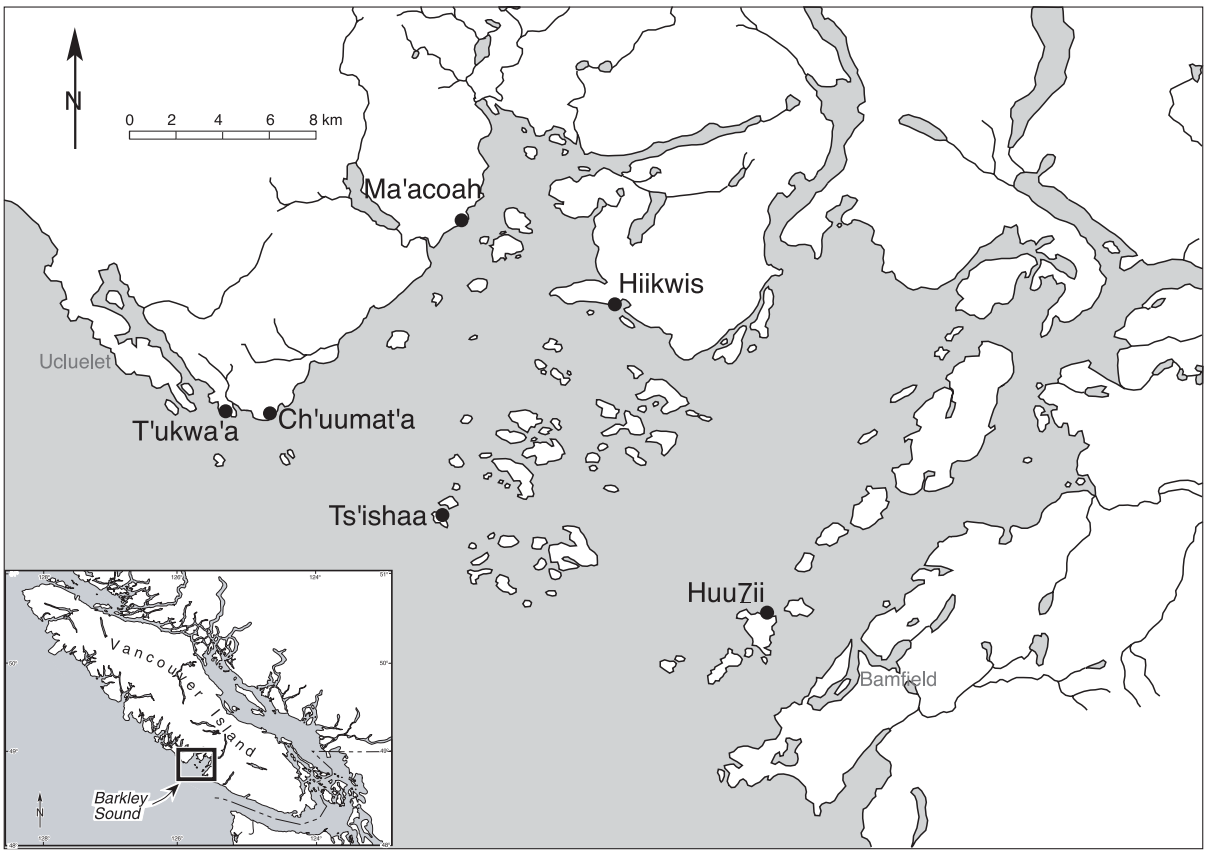

Figure 1-1. Map of Barkley Sound, showing location of Huu7ii on Diana Island and other major excavated sites discussed in the text.

Figure 1-2. In Huu-ay-aht territory (east side of Barkley Sound south of the entrance to Bamfield Inlet, looking across to Diana Island on left).

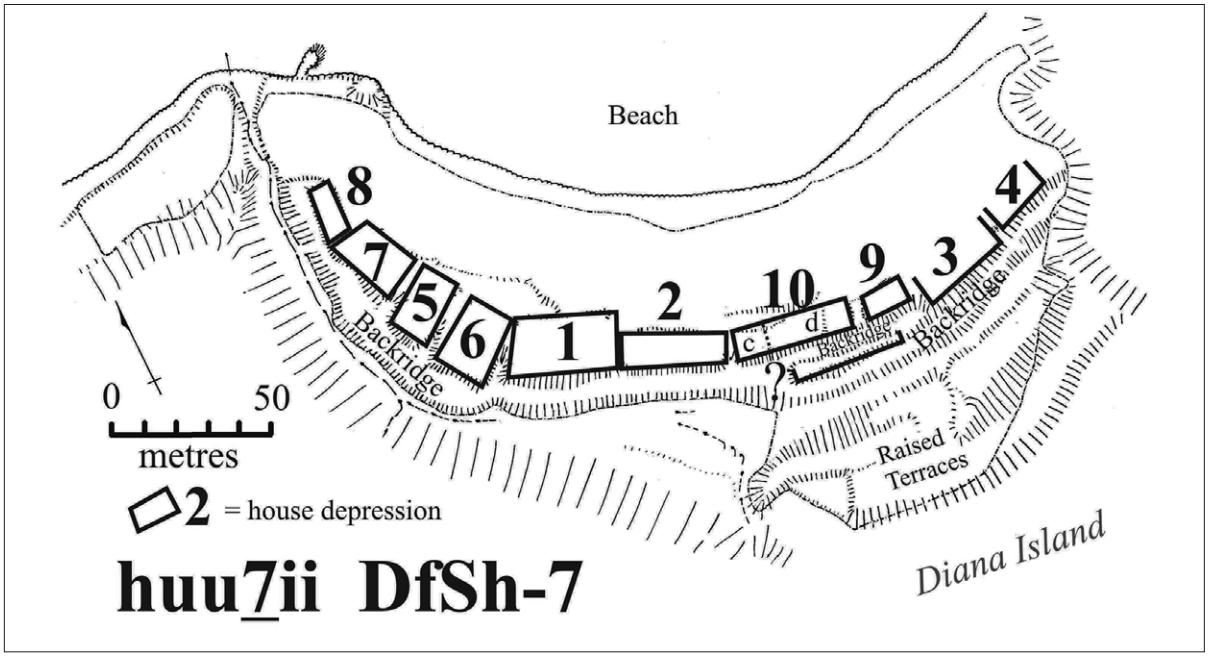

Figure 1-3. Map of Huu7ii showing house platforms visible on the surface, the back midden ridge behind the houses, and the raised terrace at the back of the site (as recorded by Al Mackie and Laurie Williamson in 1984; map courtesy of Al Mackie).

pering off toward the beach. Between these ridges are the level house floors. The fronts of the houses are more difficult to discern, although some have a clear front edge where the floor has been built up (Mackie and Williamson 2003:110). The largest of these houses, designated House I by Mackie and Williamson (2003), was about 35 m in length and 17 m in width, as indicated by the surface evidence. No posts or other structural traces remain. The back ridge behind this house location marks the inland limit of the site, beyond which the land drops off to a low swampy area, with a seasonal freshwater creek running behind the midden ridge to the beach near the western end of the site (Fig. 1-3).

The house platforms are located a considerable distance back from the modern beach, behind a lower area of discontinuous deposits. This differs from most recent village sites, at which houses tend to be located in immediate proximity to the beach. From the initial recording of this site, it was suspected that when the village was occupied the houses were closer to the beach and the low-lying area in front of the house platforms today had formed as a result of gradual uplift of the land due to on-going tectonic forces (Hutchinson 1992). The presence of two back midden ridges, and possible locations of several earlier structures behind the main row, may indicate at least one period of rebuilding the houses closer to the beach as a result of this process (Mackie and Williamson 2003). This evidence of geological uplift, plus the presence of large mature trees on some house platforms, indicated that the site had not been occupied in recent times, even before radiocarbon dates became available through excavation.

Evidence for an even earlier occupation came from an elevated terrace at the back of the site, toward the eastern end, separated from the rest of the site by a drop-off behind the rear midden ridge (Fig. 1-3). Shell midden deposits extend out over this terrace, which has several flat areas and measures roughly 90 m by 40 m. It is about 3 m above the level of the house platforms and about 9 m above modern mean sea level (marked by the barnacle line on the beach). This portion of the site appears to have been occupied at a time of higher relative sea levels. A low swampy area behind this terrace appears to have been a former marine channel extending to the east. When occupied, this portion of the site may have faced onto this marine channel, rather than the present beach to the north. Evidence of an earlier (mid-Holocene) occupation was confirmed through excavation, as is discussed later in this report (Chapter 5).

Origins of the Project

The Huu-ay-aht Archaeological Project originated in discussions held in the summer of 2002. Stella Peters, a member of the Huu-ay-aht First Nations Council, and Denis St. Claire were both participants in the Kiix7in Village Mapping and Dating Project in August of that year. Kiix7in, a Huu-ay-aht heritage village site that has unique standing house remains (Huu-ay-aht First Nations 2000), was declared a Canadian National Historic Site in 2001. Huu-ay-aht site development plans included trails, educational tours and the construction of an Interpretation Centre. In discussions as to what such a centre could contain, St. Claire suggested that an archaeological excavation to examine the subsurficial deposits would complement the detailed data already accumulated on the visible house structure remnants and would provide visitors a broader understanding of the village and past lifeways of the Huu-ay-aht. However, because of the fragile condition of the posts and beams of the remaining house structures, it would not be appropriate to excavate in the main part of the village site. An alternate Huu-ay-aht heritage village, Huu7ii on Diana Island, was suggested as a suitable substitute for Kiix7in. Huu7ii has clearly visible house platforms and was once a major village at least the size of Kiix7in. Its former importance is demonstrated in the name Huu7ii, from which the *Huu7ii7ath* (Huu-ay-aht) take their name. An excavation at Huu7ii could be focused in one of the house areas to recover data that might be comparable to what could be found in the Kiix7in deposits. The recovered materials could then become an important part of any future Huu-ay-aht Interpretation Centre displays.

Stella Peters presented a project proposal prepared by St. Claire to her fellow Huu-ay-aht Council members in the winter of 2002–2003. In March of 2003 further discussions were held between Robert Dennis, then Chief Councillor of the Huu-ay-aht First Nations, and St. Claire to finalize a budget and refine the project parameters. All research was entirely funded by the Huu-ay-aht First Nations. The project was designed to provide employment and training in archaeological fieldwork for members of the Huu-ay-aht community (Figs. 1-4, 1-5, 1-6). In April of 2003, senior researchers associated with the project (Denis St. Claire, Alan McMillan, Gay Frederick, Ian Sumpter, and Al Mackie) travelled to Huu7ii to plan strategies for excavation at the site and analysis of the recovered data.

Figure 1-4. Huu-ay-aht crew members, 2004 (from left: Marlene Williams, Charlene Nookemus, Judy Johnson, Henry Williams, Tala Dennis, Kerri Dennis, Duane Nookemus; Holly Johnson (volunteer) in front).

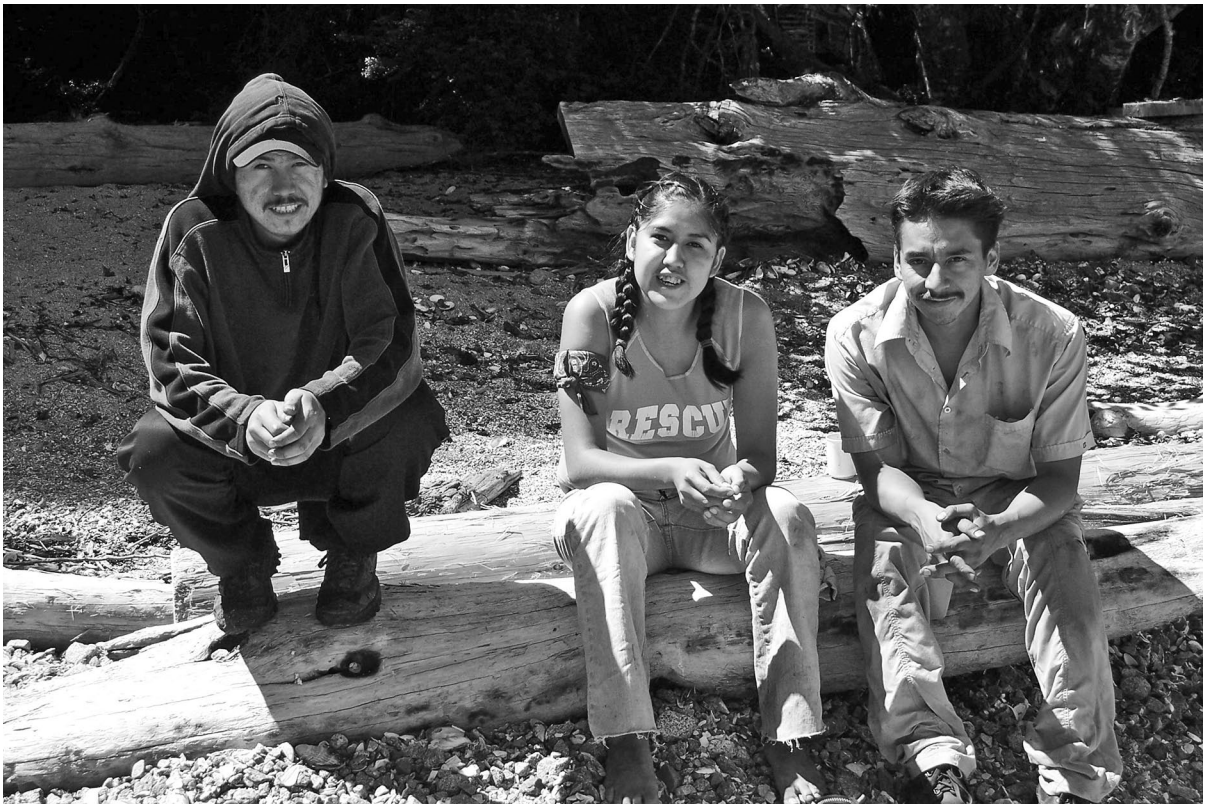

Figure 1-5. Huu-ay-aht crew members, 2006 (from left: Arthur Peters, Candice Clappis, Gabriel [Hip] Williams).

Figure 1-6. George Kaufmann, one of the senior supervisory crew, provides instruction on excavation and recording to Marlene Williams (left) and Tala Dennis (right), 2004.

Fieldwork for the Huu-ay-aht Archaeological Project began in late June of 2004, when the project co-directors (Alan McMillan and Denis St. Claire) and senior crew arrived on site to set up the excavation grid and prepare camp. Excavation with the full crew began in early July and extended for seven weeks. A considerable number of volunteers joined the professional staff and Huu-ay-aht employees throughout that time, greatly adding to what the project was able to achieve. Crew size ranged up to 24 people and a total of 40 individuals took part at some point during the project. Excavation that season was restricted to the southwest corner of House 1, plus one unit on the elevated terrace behind the main site.

Continued Huu-ay-aht interest in the project and provision of additional funding led to another field season in the summer of 2006. Negotiations with the University of Victoria resulted in that institution holding its six-week field school (taught by Nicole Smith) on the site. In all, the project ran for eight weeks in that summer, with a fluctuating but often large crew consisting of professional staff, Huu-ay-aht employees, field school students, and volunteers. At the height of the project, crew size reached 36 people, and a total of 54 people participated at various points in the excavation. With this large crew, a substantial portion of the House 1 floor could be exposed and an additional unit could be dug on the elevated terrace behind the house platforms. This report presents the results of that work over the two field seasons.

The Natural Setting

The islands and shoreline of Barkley Sound fall within the Estevan Coastal Plain, a comparatively low-lying strip of outer coast immediately backed by the rugged topography of the Vancouver Island Range (Holland 1964). The sound itself has been glacially scoured, as Pleistocene ice sheets advanced down the major inlets (such as Alberni and Effingham) and out onto the continental shelf. Holland (1964:20) characterizes the geology of this area as "folded and faulted sedimentary and volcanic rocks." Volcanic rocks such as andesites and basalts predominate, with Tertiary sandstones along the coastal plain overlain with unconsolidated Pleistocene glacial deposits (Carter 1973; Wilson 2005). The land is thickly covered with the predominantly

coniferous forests of the Coastal Western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone (Krajina 1969; Meidinger and Pojar 1991; British Columbia Ministry of Forests 1999), with the principal species being Western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*), Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*), Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), and Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*).

The lush forest cover is sustained by the rainy climate, with an average annual precipitation of about 300 cm. Winters are relatively warm and wet, with much of the annual rainfall occurring during that time. Snowfall occurs only about seven or eight days a year. Table 1-1 summarizes recent climatic data for Huu-ay-aht territory, based on stations at Bamfield East (in Bamfield Inlet at the eastern edge of Barkley Sound) and Pachena Point (on the outer coast southeast of Cape Beale, which marks the entrance to the sound).

Two major clusters of islands lie within Barkley Sound. The numerous islands of the Broken Group occupy the central portion of the sound, while those of the Deer Group are located near the eastern shore. The Deer Group consists of about 15 islands, varying greatly in size, with additional small islets and exposed rocks. This island cluster provided protected village locations and diversified habitats that supported a range of fauna. Huu7ii is on Diana Island, toward the southern end of the Deer Group and near the entrance to Bamfield Inlet (Figs. 1-1, 1-2). Diana is a relatively small island, roughly triangular in shape, extending just over 2 km north to south and about 1.8 km across its northern end. Much of the southern portion of the island, as well as the northwest corner, is held by the Huu-ay-aht as reserve land, but the northeastern portion of the island, where Huu7ii is located, is not.

Offshore from Barkley Sound lies the La Perouse Bank, with its abundance of marine life. Coastal upwelling across the bank brings deep nutrient-rich water upward to the surface layer, supporting a great concentration of plankton (Thomson 1981:83; Allen et al. 2001). This provides food for large numbers of fish and sea mammals. The resultant high biomass made this area highly productive for Nuu-chah-nulth fishing, sealing, and whaling. When the reserve commissioner laid out reserves for the Huu-ay-aht in the late 19th century, he included several outer coast seasonal villages that were highly valued for their access to the offshore fishing grounds, particularly for halibut (O'Reilly 1883).

Numerous species of fish, bird, sea mammal, and shellfish would have been available within a short distance of major villages in Barkley Sound. A survey of the birds found in Pacific Rim National Park, including both seasonal visitors and permanent residents, lists 247 species (Hatler, Campbell, and Dorst 1978). Economically important bird species include a variety of ducks, geese, grebes, mergansers, cormorants, and gulls. The waters of Barkley Sound and the offshore banks provided an abundant and varied supply of fish, including halibut (*Hippoglossus stenolepis*), cod (*Gadus macrocephalus*), lingcod (*Ophiodon elongatus*), rockfish (*Sebastes* spp.), herring (*Clupea harengus pallasi*), dogfish (*Squalus acanthius*), and salmon (*Oncorhynchus* spp.). The waters also provided access to a variety of sea mammals, including Stellar or northern sea lion (*Eumetopias jubata*), California sea lion (*Zalophus californianus*), northern fur seal (*Callorhinus ursinus*), harbour seal (*Phoca vitulina*), sea otter (*Enhydra lutris*), and a number of cetaceans, the most important of which were the humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), grey whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*), and Pacific harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*).

Table 1-1. Modern climatic data, Huu-ay-aht Territory (Source: Environment Canada 1993). (Figures refer to the averages from 1961 to 1990.)

	Bamfield East	Pachena Point
mean January temperature	4.4°C	4.7°C
mean August temperature	14.5°C	13.7°C
mean annual temperature	9.1°C	9.0°C
minimum recorded temperature	–10.6°C	–15.6°C
maximum recorded temperature	32.8°C	31.7°C
mean annual precipitation	287.6 cm	310.2 cm
days per year with precipitation	193	210
days per year with snowfall	7	8

Land mammals, on the other hand, were uncommon in this island environment, with only the coast deer (*Odocoileus hemionus columbianus*) being important in the diet, although bear (*Ursus americanus vancouveri*) and elk (*Cervus elaphus roosevelti*) could have been obtained from the nearby shores of Barkley Sound. Plant food resources were also limited in this island setting, although a wide range of berries and other edible plants would have been available in the broader Barkley Sound region. A range of intertidal invertebrates, including several species of clams, mussels, scallops, barnacles, chitons, and sea urchins, also played a vital role in the local economy (Sumpter 2005).

Previous Archaeological Work

Relatively few large-scale archaeological projects, involving extensive excavation, have taken place in Nuu-chah-nulth territory along western Vancouver Island (see McMillan 1999 for review). Until recently, our understanding of the ancient Nuu-chah-nulth past came primarily from Yuquot, the major village of the Mowachaht people of Nootka Sound, and several sites in Hesquiaht territory, in Hesquiat Harbour. A large excavation unit dug at Yuquot (DjSp-1) revealed deep and continuous deposits, documenting the evolution of Nuu-chah-nulth culture from about 4700 cal BP into modern times (Dewhirst 1978, 1980). The Hesquiaht sites are more recent, spanning the past 1,200 years. Frederick (Calvert 1980) provided a detailed study of the faunal remains from three major Hesquiaht sites, while Haggarty (1982) examined the artifacts.

At the same time as these projects, a major long-term excavation was occurring at Ozette, the southernmost Makah village on the outer shore of the Olympic Peninsula. At that location, waterlogged deposits sealed under the mud of an ancient slide had preserved the crushed but intact remains of houses and their contents, providing an unparalleled glimpse into Northwest Coast village life just prior to contact with Europeans. The numerous small bone and stone objects recovered from midden sites elsewhere were found here as parts of composite tools, intact with the wooden and bark components. As the Makah are closely related to the Nuu-chah-nulth socially and culturally, the Ozette discoveries provided extremely valuable insights for interpreting archaeological remains from western Vancouver Island.

Mitchell's (1990) important synthesis of archaeological knowledge for Nuu-chah-nulth territory was based mainly on excavated data from Yuquot and Hesquiat Village, at that time the only major archaeological projects on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Mitchell defined the West Coast culture type, viewing it as the archaeological traces of evolving Nuu-chah-nulth culture (see also McMillan 1998a). Claims for lengthy continuity at Yuquot led Mitchell to propose that Nuu-chah-nulth precontact history could be encompassed within a single culture type. Distinguishing features of this culture type, defined almost entirely in terms of artifacts, consist of bone points and bipoints, barbed bone points and harpoon heads, large and small composite toggling harpoon valves of bone or antler, bone splinter awls, stone and bone fishhook shanks, bark beaters and shredders of whalebone, and mussel shell celts and knives (Mitchell 1990:356). The rarity or absence of flaked stone tools and flaking detritus is also seen as an identifying trait. In fact, stone implements in general are rare, with the exception of the numerous abrasive stones that played an important role in shaping tools of other materials. According to Mitchell (1990:357),

> the archaeological assemblages are so like described Nootkan [Nuu-chah-nulth] material culture that a lengthy reconstruction of the technology is not necessary. There are artifacts interpretable as whale, small sea mammal, and salmon harpoons; parts of composite fishhooks; knives suitable for butchering salmon or herring or for preparing other fish and foods; woodworking tools; and tools for shaping the numerous bone implements … These tools are represented even in the [earliest] levels at Yuquot Village.

Barkley Sound received little detailed archaeological attention until relatively recently. An early, but very small, excavation took place in Huu-ay-aht territory, at Aguilar Point, in 1968 (Buxton 1969). Aguilar Point (DfSg-3) is a defensive earthwork atop a rocky promontory at the entrance to Bamfield Inlet. Although few items of material culture were recovered during the limited excavation, two radiocarbon dates suggest that people were living there about 1,200 years ago and that the defensive ditch was dug through earlier midden deposits about 700 years ago (Buxton 1969:29).

Much more extensive excavation was carried out in 1973 and 1974 at the Shoemaker Bay site (DhSe-2), at the head of the long Alberni Inlet that extends north from Barkley Sound (McMillan

and St. Claire 1982). Although a large assemblage of artifacts and faunal remains was recovered and analyzed, this all appears to predate the late Nuu-chah-nulth occupation of the Alberni Valley (Drucker 1951:5; McMillan and St. Claire 1982; St. Claire 1991:79-81). Following that fieldwork, the directors turned in 1975 to a survey of archaeological sites from the Alberni Valley to Barkley Sound (St. Claire 1975; McMillan and St. Claire 1977, 1982). Given the huge area covered, small crew, and short time, the survey concentrated on the most visible archaeological sites.

Two detailed, intensive survey and mapping programs were conducted in portions of Barkley Sound in the 1980s. The Pacific Rim Project involved systematic site survey throughout Pacific Rim National Park Reserve between 1982 and 1984. This survey covered the three units of the Park: the Long Beach area, the islands of the Broken Group, and the West Coast trail, the latter including the outer coast portion of Huu-ay-aht territory (Haggarty and Inglis 1985; Inglis and Haggarty 1986). These surveys substantially increased the number of known Nuu-chah-nulth heritage sites in the Barkley Sound area. For example, 163 sites were recorded in the Broken Group islands alone, of which shell middens, marking the locations of former villages or camps, comprise almost half. In 1984, the Ohiaht (the former spelling of Huu-ay-aht) Ethnoarchaeological Project involved a detailed inventory of a portion of Huu-ay-aht territory, including Bamfield Inlet and the adjacent eastern coastline of the sound, along with the closest Deer Group islands, including Diana (Mackie and Williamson 2003). The village of Huu7ii was recorded and sketch mapped, and the house features plotted and described, as part of that project.

A number of archaeological excavation projects occurred in Barkley Sound in the 1990s. In Huu-ay-aht territory, the ethnographic village of *7uuts'uu7a* (DfSg-2), located below the defensive earthwork at Aguilar Point, received minor testing (Coates and Eldridge 1992). The few artifacts consist primarily of bone points and bipoints; among the relatively abundant faunal remains, fur seals and sea lions dominate the mammals and salmon comprise most of the fish. In the territory of the Ucluelet First Nation, a small excavation at the Little Beach site (DfSj-100) near Ucluelet exposed a burial location that had been used between about 4500 and 2500 cal BP (Arcas Consulting Archeologists 1991). Distinctive stone tools from this site show closest resemblance to the earliest occupation at Shoemaker Bay, which is at least partially contemporaneous. Across Ucluelet Inlet, on the Ucluelet reserve, a small excavation into a deep shell midden deposit at Ittatsoo North (DfSj-40) demonstrated human occupation for at least 2,300 years (Arcas Consulting Archeologists 1998). At that site, the primarily bone artifacts resemble implements of the later West Coast culture type. Fish, particularly lingcod and rockfish, dominate the faunal assemblage, along with sea mammals, particularly fur seal.

Large-scale excavation in Barkley Sound began with the Toquaht Archaeological Project, involving fieldwork between 1991 and 1996. Intensive survey and mapping of sites in Toquaht traditional territory in the western sound was accompanied by excavation at three major villages and two smaller sites, revealing a lengthy period of occupation (McMillan and St. Claire 1992, 1996; McMillan 1999). The largest of the excavated sites is T'ukw'aa (DfSj-23), the major traditional village of the Toquaht (*T'ukw'aa7ath*) people and the place from which they derive their name. Extensive excavation, at both the main village and on top of an adjacent headland that served as a defensive location, uncovered almost 1,500 artifacts and a large quantity of faunal remains. A series of radiocarbon dates indicates that this site was first occupied about 1,200 years ago and continued in use until the early twentieth century. A nearby site, Ch'uumat'a (DfSi-4), with even deeper deposits (slightly over four metres at the back of the site), was excavated in an attempt to extend this sequence further back in time. Deposits at this site spanned the period from about 4600 cal BP to early historic times. About 750 artifacts, plus a large quantity of faunal remains, were recovered. Chipped stone tools and several other distinctive artifact types were found only in the older deposits, leading to the suggestion of a possible cultural break just over 2,000 years ago (McMillan 1998b). Less extensive excavations took place at Ma'acoah (*Ma7akwuu7a;* DfSi-5), the ethnographic winter village of the Toquaht. A date of 1800 BP was obtained from the base of the site, but most of the cultural remains recovered are associated with a later date of about 600 BP (McMillan 1999:74; Monks 2006). Monks (2006) has recently reported on the faunal remains from Ma'acoah. Two elevated lookout or defensive sites (DfSj-29 and -30) on rocky islets in the George Fraser Islands, at the entrance to Ucluelet Inlet, have also received minor testing. The three Toquaht village locations are shown on Figure 1-1.

Major archaeological research in Barkley Sound continued with the Tseshaht Archaeo-

logical Project, from 1999 to 2001 (McMillan and St. Claire 2005). Excavation was centred on the major village of Ts'ishaa (DfSi-16; Fig. 1-1) and the neighbouring site of Himayis (DfSi-17). Ts'ishaa was the principal village of the Tseshaht (*Ts'ishaa7ath*) people in their oral histories and the site from which they take their name. Creation stories specify this as the location where the Tseshaht came into being (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:52–53). Excavation at the main village site yielded a total of 736 artifacts and a great quantity of faunal remains, a large sample of which has been analyzed to reveal a picture of past lifeways (Frederick and Crockford 2005; McKechnie 2005a, 2005b; McMillan et al. 2008; Sumpter 2005). The people who lived at Ts'ishaa exploited a wide range of resources in the immediate vicinity of their outer island home. California mussel was a major part of their diet, as is evident in the huge shell midden that accumulated at the village. Fishing was clearly a paramount activity, with the faunal assemblage dominated by rockfish and other fish species that were readily available off the rocky shores. The artifacts confirm this reliance on fishing in the culture, as the most numerous implements are small bone points and bipoints, almost all of which were parts of composite fishing gear. Oral histories tell of the great whalers who once lived at Ts'ishaa, and the archaeological evidence confirms the importance of whaling. Not only was whalebone abundant in the midden, but the presence of a still-embedded mussel shell harpoon cutting blade in the back of a humpback whale skull demonstrates that active whaling was taking place in Barkley Sound over 500 years ago. The maritime lifeways of the people of Ts'ishaa are also affirmed by the abundance of other sea mammal remains. Fur seals were a major part of the diet, as is the case at almost all excavated Nuu-chah-nulth village sites (McMillan 1999:140; Crockford et al. 2002), and abundant remains of several species of porpoise and dolphin indicate that the people of Ts'ishaa had well-developed maritime hunting skills and technology. Radiocarbon dates show that the main village deposits span the last two millennia.

Earlier deposits were identified on a back terrace behind the main village at Ts'ishaa. Like the back terrace at Huu7ii, this was an area that had been occupied at a time of higher sea levels, when the main village area was an active inter-tidal zone. A series of radiocarbon dates places this occupation from roughly 3000 to 5000 cal BP. Stone tools, many of which were chipped to shape, dominate the artifact assemblage. This is in marked contrast to the later village site, as well as the more general West Coast culture type. Closest parallels are with Little Beach and the lower levels at Ch'uumat'a, as well as with Shoemaker Bay I, at the head of Alberni Inlet (McMillan and St. Claire 1982). Cultural differences between these earlier components and the later village sites are unexplained, but the arrival of a new population in Barkley Sound just over 2,000 years ago is one possibility (McMillan 1998b, 2003a).

More recent work (2008 to 2010) in Tseshaht territory involves excavation at the two adjacent sites of Ukwatis (DfSh-15) and Hiikwis (DfSh-16) along Sechart Channel in the upper sound (Fig. 1-1). Large traditional plank houses once stood at both sites, as is evidenced by flat platforms and a back midden ridge at Ukwatis, and flat platforms, post remnants and a fallen beam at Hiikwis. Abundant recent historic materials document use of both sites well into the 20th century. Radiocarbon dates from the base of the front platform at Hiikwis show initial use by at least 800 years ago, while a date from the base of a rear platform indicates human occupation by about 1,200 years ago. Similar dates came from Ukwatis, where the front platform was in use by about 1,300 years ago. However, additional archaeological deposits were located well back into the modern forest behind the main site at Ukwatis, corresponding to times of higher sea level. Dates from the bottom of this deposit show human presence by at least 2,800 years ago, while a date of about 2,000 years from the upper layers indicates when this portion of the site was no longer occupied as people followed the retreating sea levels to their present position.

In Huu-ay-aht territory, the ethnographic village of Kiix7in (DeSh-1) and its associated bluff-top fortress (DeSh-2), on the eastern Barkley Sound shoreline near the entrance to Bamfield Inlet, have been the focus of recent archaeological attention. The location's nomination as a National Historic Site led to detailed examination and mapping of surface remains, including standing structural elements (Huu-ay-aht First Nations 2000; Mackie and Williamson 2003). Remains of at least ten houses are evident at the site, of which eight are traditional longhouses with standing frames or architectural elements visible on the surface (Fig. 1-7). Dendroarchaeological analysis of surviving posts and beams dates the visible house remains to the early and mid-19th century (Smith et al. 2005). Coring of the archaeological deposits around the standing structures revealed

Figure 1-7. Standing wooden architectural remains at Kiix7in. This entrance framework at the front of a large house once supported a central gable beam.

evidence of earlier, pre-European occupation. Charcoal obtained from a house location at one end of the site provided an age estimate of 540 to 480 cal BP, while two more recent dates came from the central portion of the village (Sumpter 2003:18). An older date of 960 to 670 cal BP comes from atop the fortress, suggesting that the village would also have been in use at that time. At the end of the village closest to the fortress, a sample taken from the base of a deep midden deposit on an apparent raised landform yielded a date of 5320 to 5050 cal BP (Sumpter et al. 2002; Sumpter 2003:18). This early date is contemporaneous with the oldest excavated materials from the back terrace at Ts'ishaa, and is only slightly earlier than the dates from the Huu7ii back terrace. As is discussed earlier in this chapter, the Huu-ay-aht desire to see further research into their heritage following the investigations at Kiix7in led directly to the work of the Huu-ay-aht Archaeological Project at Huu7ii, the results of which are reported here.