

CHAPTER 25

Early Houses in the Lower Fraser River Region

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Introduction

Interest in First Nations pre-contact period houses in the Lower Fraser River Region extends back to the early days of professional anthropology and archaeology in British Columbia (Barnett 1944, 1955; Smith 1947; Duff 1952; Hill-Tout in Maud 1978). Despite this early interest, only recently have archaeologists working in this part of British Columbia begun to intensively explore household archaeology (e.g., Lepofsky et al. 2000, 2009). This may reflect the limited amount of available data, great costs associated with detailed investigation of complex house features, or just different research priorities until this time.

This chapter provides a synopsis of existing information of early (pre-3000 BP) houses in the Lower Fraser River Region and identifies data gaps, common themes, and avenues for future research. While the sample is admittedly small, currently limited to six sites, this summary is a necessary first step toward a greater understanding of the emergence of houses in the region. Environmental settings, architectural details, and age determination of structures from the Maurer, *Iy'oythel*, *Xá:ytem*, *Qithyil*, Crescent Beach, and St. Mungo Cannery sites are summarized (Figure 1). Previously reported data from House Structures 1 and 2 at *Xá:ytem* are reassessed in light of recent research.

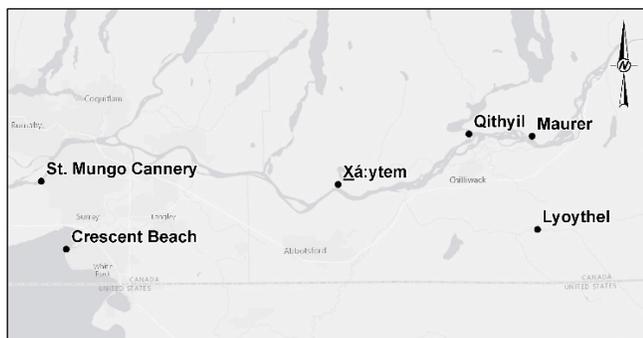


Figure 1. Location of early pre-contact period houses in the Lower Fraser River Region.

Maurer Site (DhRk-8)

Located on a terrace at the base of Hopyard Hill near the confluence of Cheam Slough and the Fraser River, the Maurer site (DhRk-8) was originally excavated between 1971 and 1973 (Percy 1972; LeClair 1973, 1976). Excavations focused on a large feature interpreted to be a dwelling

(House Structure 1). An exposed floor zone belonging to a second house feature (House Structure 2) was identified adjacent to the first dwelling (Schaepe 2003).

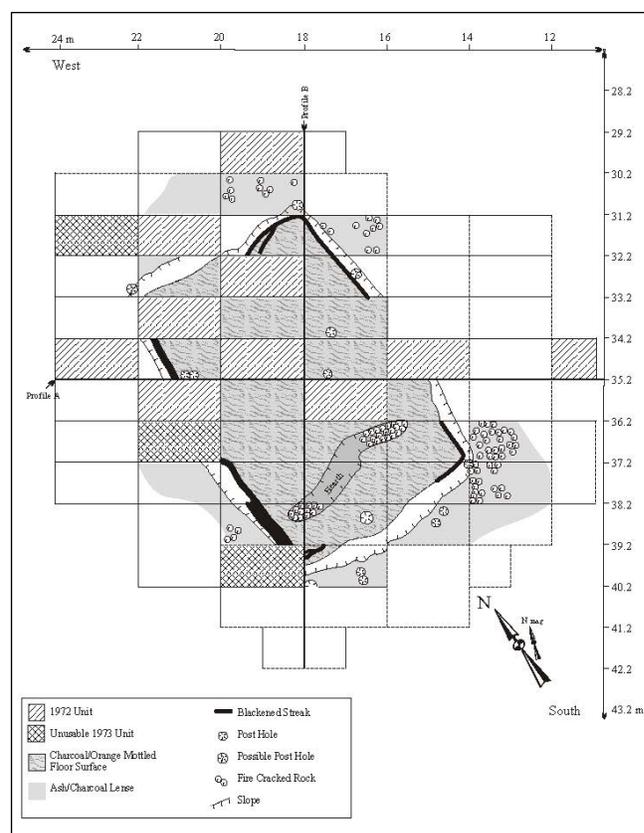


Figure 2. Plan view of House Structure 1 at the Maurer site.

House Structure 1

This structure is a shallow, subterranean dwelling, rectangular in plan, oriented north-south and measuring 7.5 m by 5.0 m (Figure 2). The entire feature was excavated to a depth of between 0.3 and 0.4 m below ground surface with a total floor surface area of 37.5 m² (Schaepe 2003:138).

Four large load-bearing post mold features (20 to 26 cm diameter; mean=24) are present in the corners of the structure, with three smaller diameter post molds set between the larger posts. The interior periphery of the house floor was held in place with plank retaining walls secured by

small interior posts (stakes). There is no obvious evidence of an entrance, and the walls appear to have been vertical, not angled. An oblong hearth feature measuring 3.0 m by 0.35 m and 0.30 m deep is present in the southern third of the structure. Floor deposits range in thickness from 10 to 15 cm (Schaepe 2003:138).

There are two radiocarbon samples with direct and reliable association with the structural remains. Both samples were carbonized material collected from the bottom of the hearth and provided dates of 4220±100 BP (4737 Cal BP) (GAK-4919) and 4240±110 BP (4768 Cal BP) (GAK-4922) (Kigoshi 1974; Schaepe 2003:150).

Based on a re-analysis of data from House Structure 1, Schaepe (2003:136, 138) believes large, vertical posts supported the roof with smaller stakes or posts securing horizontal plank walls (see Boas 1891:11-12). The structure likely housed a semi-sedentary, if not permanently settled, extended family household (Schaepe 2003:152; Lepofsky et al. 2009:606).

House Structure 2

Partial remains of a second house feature were identified in a road cut exposure approximately 20 m northeast of House Structure 1. An approximately 3 to 4 m long, 10 cm thick, dark layer of organic sediment with an associated post mold (25 cm wide and 25 cm deep) was readily evident in the exposure and interpreted to be floor deposits (Schaepe 2003:147; Lepofsky et al. 2009:606). A charcoal sample collected from the exposed floor layer, provided an age of 4780±340 BP (5479 Cal BP) (GAK-4927) (Kigoshi 1974; Schaepe 2003:147).

Iy'oythel Site (DgRk-10)

The site of *Iy'oythel* (DgRk-10) is situated in the Chilliwack River valley, on a river terrace, roughly 10 m above the Chilliwack River at Allison Pool, a large natural bedrock feature and prime fishing location. A series of cultural depressions (CDs) are present and a modest excavation was undertaken in CD 3. This feature is a pithouse associated with a single short-term occupation (Schaepe and Rousseau 1999:58) (Chapter 9).

CD 3 is circular in plan, bowl-shaped, and measures 6.0 m in diameter. The walls are moderately steep with a rim surface-to-basin depth of 1.0 m. Investigations were limited to three 1 m by 0.5 m excavation units and one 0.25 m² unit (total excavated volume: ~1.5 m³), placed through the center of the depression. Five strata were recorded, with Stratum V composed of homogenous, fine grey beach sand with no pebbles or cobbles representing basal cultural deposits (house floor occupation zone) overlying sterile river deposits. Strata I to IV are post-occupational infilling events. A small hearth feature was identified in Stratum V in the northeast portion of a small extension to excavation Unit 1. Charcoal recovered from a matrix sample taken from the interior of this feature was dated to 4110±40 BP (4638 Cal BP) (Beta 128607) (Schaepe and Rousseau 1999).

Xá:ytem Site (DgRn-23)

Xá:ytem (DgRn-23), also known by its earlier name, the Hatzic Rock site, is located on a south facing river terrace side-slope on the north side of the Fraser River approximately 3 km east of Mission and 80 km east of Vancouver. The main channel of the Fraser River is 500 m to the south, and Hatzic Lake (a former oxbow) is situated less than 1 km to the east. Given that *Xá:ytem* is situated at the toe of a river terrace immediately proximate to floodplain deposits, it is likely that the Fraser River was closer to *Xá:ytem* during its occupation.

Xá:ytem was the focus of intensive investigations in the early 1990s following its discovery during land-altering activities associated with a subdivision development (Pokotylo and Brass 1997). Of significance was the discovery and excavation of a complex feature interpreted to be a domestic structure (House Structure 1) and a second dwelling (House Structure 2) exposed in the wall profile of an exploratory test trench (Mason 1994). While assessing the extent of archaeological deposits at *Xá:ytem* as part of an archaeological impact assessment, Wilson (1991:15) later encountered a complex feature interpreted to be an excavated house (House Structure 3). Subsequent work by the University of British Columbia identified yet another domestic structure (House Structure 4) (Ormerod and Matson 2000; Ormerod 2002). The sections that follow summarize salient aspects of House Structures 1 to 4 at *Xá:ytem*.

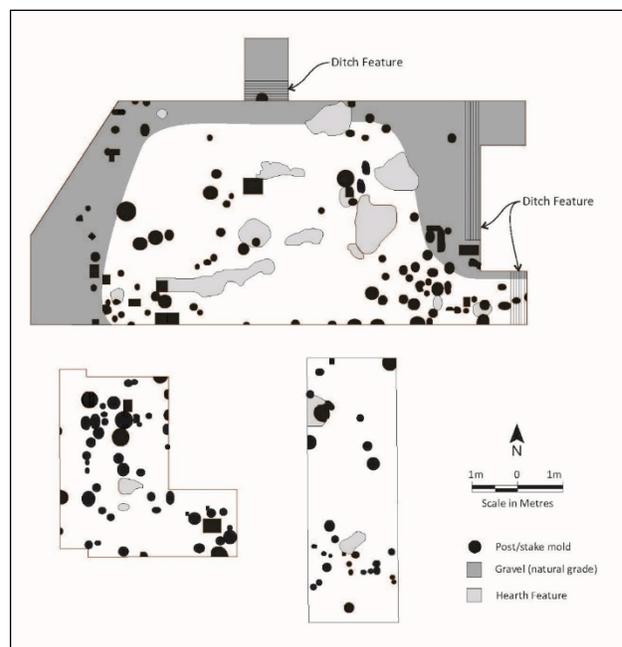


Figure 3. Plan view of House Structure 1 at *Xá:ytem*.

House Structure 1

Initial field work at *Xá:ytem* was salvage in nature, and data recovery methods included controlled hand excavation by natural layer and/or 10 cm level, manual excavation by level with reduced stratigraphic control (e.g., 20 to 25 cm levels),

and backhoe trenching. The more aggressive methods were employed in response to a desire to expose as much of the structure as quickly as possible prior to development of the land that would have impacted and destroyed remaining cultural deposits. Approximately two-thirds of House Structure 1 was exposed (Figures 3 and 4).



Figure 4. General view of Xá:ytem main excavation area (House Structure 1). Vertically-placed log sections mark locations of post molds extending in to basal gravel.



Figure 5. View of excavation in progress in House Structure 1 at the Xá:ytem site (looking east). Note the distinct gravel layer. UBC Laboratory of Archaeology photograph Ref.#: anso_loa_DgRn23_1991_C-126.

House Structure 1 straddles the base of the river terrace and floodplain deposits and, as a result, it was partially excavated (“cut”) into the side slope to establish a level living surface, creating what was originally interpreted as being a low, 1 m high gravel bench flanking the northern half of the structure (Figure 3, 5 and 6). Schaepe (2003:151) has suggested that this “bench” may simply be a consequence of partially excavating the house structure into the terrace side slope and that it served no purpose other than defining the house floor. This house structure measures about 9.5 m (N-S) by 7.5 m (E-W), with a roughly square floor plan outline and a floor area of approximately 71.25 m². Floor deposits (Occupation Zone III) were easily identified as a thick (10 to 20 cm) dark band of sandy silt organic matrix overlying sterile gravel. Hearths and post

features clearly evident in many wall profiles also helped isolate the house floor (Mason 1994:41) (Figure 7).

Evidence of a narrow ditch feature excavated into sterile gravel deposits was encountered on the upslope (north) side and eastern margin of House Structure 1 (Figures 3 and 8). This feature diverted rain runoff from the terrace slope above the structure (Mason 1994:96, 103). Along the north margin, the ditch is oriented east–west and measures 95 cm wide at its top, tapering to a bottom width of 23 cm, with a depth of 43 cm. The ditch feature along the eastern margin of the structure is less pronounced and proved difficult to trace (Figure 3).



Figure 6. General view of the gravel cut interface in House Structure 1 at Xá:ytem. UBC Laboratory of Archaeology photograph Ref.#:anso_loa_DgRn23_1991_C-221.

Post molds were very common, with 188 circular/ovoid post molds and 15 rectangular examples encountered (Figures 3 and 7). Post mold diameters or maximum dimensions for ovoid and rectangular posts ranged from 5 to 51 cm with a median of 16 cm. Six post molds have maximum dimensions that exceed 38 cm. Several post molds helped delineate the southern margin of the structure. The pattern of larger (>25 cm diameter) post molds was considered separately from the pattern of small post molds in an attempt to isolate the locations of major vertical structural supports. Unfortunately, the results were inconclusive, likely indicative of structural maintenance and refurbishment of internal house supports over an extended period (Mason 1994:91, 103, 105).

Larger post molds likely represent the remains of main load-bearing posts that supported the roof. These would include post molds with diameters exceeding 38 cm. Smaller post molds are probably the remains of posts that supported wall planks or light constructions, such as drying and storage racks, interior partitions, or benches. They are generally located along the periphery of the building, whereas the large post molds were more toward the centre except in the southwest corner of the structure where larger examples are present (Mason 1994:105). There is no obvious evidence of an entrance, and walls appear to have been vertical based on the alignment of post mold features.



Figure 7. Typical *Xá:ytem* House Structure 1 house floor deposits with post molds extending into basal gravel deposits.



Figure 8. Profile view of ditch feature associated with House Structure 1 at *Xá:ytem*. UBC Laboratory of Archaeology photograph Ref.:#:anso_loa_DgRn23_1991_C-255.

A large number of hearths ($n=19$) are associated with the floor deposits in House Structure 1 (Figure 3), and several hearths from Occupation Zone III lie on or against the gravel feature that defines the northern half of the structure. Similarly, there were a number of charcoal concentrations ($n=15$), which are interpreted to represent episodically discarded contents of hearths (Figure 3) (Mason 1994:95).

Three solid radiocarbon dates are associated with House Structure 1. Charcoal from a post feature provided a date of 4420 ± 180 BP (5061 Cal BP) (Nuta-1452). Two dates were derived from carbon recovered from hearth features in floor deposits: 4490 ± 70 BP (5139 Cal BP) (SFU-888) and 4800 ± 70 BP (5520 Cal BP) (Beta-46708) (Mason 1994:37).

The high incidence of hearth features and charcoal concentrations reflect an intensive and dynamic use of domestic space over time by successive family groups. The numerous hearths and charcoal concentrations also raise the possibility of a secondary specialized use, such as a smokehouse. While the latter function is a possibility, it would not have been the structure's original or primary function since the diversity of artifact types in the assemblage secured from floor deposits are more consistent with domestic activities (see Mason 1994).

House Structure 2

The remains of House Structure 2 were exposed in an exploratory backhoe trench about 2 m east of House Structure 1. Features exposed in the 6 m long north trench wall profile include dwelling floor deposits ranging from 8 to 26 cm thick above sterile gravel deposits and five post molds ranging from 9 to 76 cm in diameter (median = 22 cm). Two large post molds (19 cm and 76 cm) bracket a shallow (25 cm deep) 2.45 m wide dish-shaped depression cut into sterile gravel deposits.

Features observed in the south wall profile include nine post molds ranging from 12 to 24 cm in diameter (median = 14 cm) extending into sterile gravel deposits. Floor deposits were not isolated in the south trench wall profile drawings, but the same dish-shaped depression visible in the north trench wall profile is present. In this profile it measures 2.62 m wide and 20 cm deep. Five of the nine post molds fall within the basin-shaped feature. Because it was not intensively excavated, the maximum floor dimensions of House Structure 2 are not known (Mason 1994).

Two charcoal samples from floor deposits exposed in the north trench wall profile were radiocarbon dated and provided age determinations of 8980 ± 90 BP (10077 Cal BP) (Beta-46707) and 4530 ± 120 BP (5176 Cal BP) (Beta-47260). The 10077 Cal BP date is considered problematic (Mason 1994) because of its very early age compared to other samples from the site. Failure to obtain a second similar date of this antiquity from a nearby sample raises questions of its validity. The 4900-year spread between the two dates cannot be explained, and this early date should be considered suspect unless dates of similar antiquity are obtained in future from House Structure 2. The primary function of House Structure 2 is considered to be the same as House Structure 1.

House Structure 3

During exploratory backhoe trenching at *Xá:ytem*, a complex feature was encountered roughly 25 m west of House Structure 1. Although limited in nature, investigations at this location exposed a raised bench, a circular 15 cm diameter post mold, and several possible post molds that appear to be part of a larger excavated house feature.



Figure 9. Profile view of raised bench feature and post mold associated with House Structure 3 at *Xá:ytem*. Stantec Consulting photograph.

The bench was evident in the trench wall, extending horizontally for about 60 cm then dipping about 30 cm to the bottom of the trench (Figure 9). The post mold is associated with the bench and was excavated to a depth of 75 cm below surface. Several other possible post molds were also observed, but could not be confirmed.

To avoid unnecessary damage to the feature, the exploratory trench was backfilled with no further investigation. The feature remains undated and its full extent is not known (Wilson 1991:15).

House Structure 4

Later excavations conducted by the University of British Columbia approximately 25 m southwest of House Structure 1 uncovered roughly 50% of a complex feature (House Structure 4) that is thought to be a rectangular house floor measuring over 3.5 m wide at its north end and at least 4.5 m long (Ormerod 2002:40).

House floor preparation included intentional capping of an earlier hearth feature with a 2 cm thick layer of clay and 9 cm of sterile silt. Floor deposits are compact, black, and range in thickness from 2 to 5 cm. Palaeobotanical remains recovered from the floor include charred blackberry (*Rubus* sp.), lamb's-quarters (*Chenopodium album*), and tule (*Scirpus lacustris*) (Ormerod 2002:39-40). A charcoal sample from the floor of House Structure 4 was dated to 5050±130 BP (5801 Cal BP) (Beta-143727) (Ormerod 2002:69).

Structural elements include a bench-like cut into the slope of the terrace that ranged in height from 30 cm at the north end to 10 cm in the east, forming the floor and back of the structure (Ormerod and Matson 2000:16; Ormerod 2002:40; Lepofsky et al. 2009:603). A small number of posts ranging from 10 to 24 cm in diameter followed the bench-like cut. An equal number of stake molds ranging from 6 to 9 cm diameter followed the wall line and represent wall supports.

Interior benches or storage racks may have been supported by 6 cm diameter stakes. A 12 cm diameter angled post at the western end of House Structure 4 would have intercepted the edge of the structure about 1 m above the ground surface. The pattern of post and stake molds suggest the structure had vertical posts and walls on the north and east sides (Lepofsky et al. 2009), and possibly a slanted wall on the west side (Ormerod 2002:40).

Although the paired stake system along the eastern margin and prepared floor are suggestive of shed-roof house construction (see Boas 1891:11-12; Barnett 1955:54), House Structure 4 is thought to have had a lean-to superstructure (see Barnett 1955:40), providing shelter for a nuclear family. Given the absence of an obvious hearth and fire-cracked rock (Ormerod 2002:40) and given the moisture-retaining nature of the matrix in which House Structure 4 was constructed, Ormerod and Matson (2000:42) conclude that this structure was probably not occupied during the winter months.

Qithyil Site (DhRI-16)

Located along the Harrison River at its confluence with the Fraser River, *Qithyil* (also known as the Scowlitz site) occupies a 200 m long river terrace with rows of shallow rectangular depressions, earthen platforms, earthen burial mounds, stone cairns, and wet site deposits (Lepofsky et al. 2000:396). A series of superimposed structural remains (House Structures 1 to 4) were found in "Area A," and a charcoal sample associated with the earliest remains (House Structure 4) dates to 2940±180 BP (3108 Cal BP) (WSU-5051), placing the age of the structure in the transition from the Middle Period (6000 to 3000 BP) to the Late Period (3000 to 250 BP). The structure faces east, toward the Fraser River (Morrison 1997:31, 38, 40, 45; Lepofsky et al. 2000:399-402).

While detailed investigation of House Structure 4 is limited to a 1 by 4 m recovery area, a number of architectural features were identified including a living surface constructed by cutting into the natural terrace slope and infilling (3 to 15 cm) low areas to create a level floor. The floor is composed of compacted earth capped with a thin layer of olive-brown clay, and a low (20 cm) gravel bench is present at the western edge of the structure. A 34 cm deep post mold that measures at least 30 cm by 23 cm extends into the northern wall of the unit and into sterile gravel deposits. A concentration of fire-cracked rock was found at the bottom of the feature (Morrison and Blake 1998:47).

A large ovoid pit (80 by 60 cm and 23 cm deep) excavated into sterile ground was found 1 m west of the presumed edge of the house structure floor. The surface of this pit was level with the floor deposits and the pit contained over 27 kg of fire-cracked rock. Functional interpretations include a possible midden pit, a storage pit that was later infilled, or the remains of a large vertical corner roof-support post (Morrison and Blake 1998:47).

Based on the small size of the structure floor, it was likely occupied by a nuclear family in contrast to larger multi-family houses from later periods at *Qithyil*, indicating a change in social and economic organization (Lepofsky et al. 2000:411).

Crescent Beach Site (DgRr-1)

At the Crescent Beach site (DgRr-1) in White Rock in the Fraser River delta, Matson (2008a-c) describes a bowl-shaped depression feature interpreted to be a winter domestic "pithouse" structure dating to the end of the Middle Period (6000 to 3000 years BP). About half of the feature was excavated, providing a minimum floor size estimate of 4.0 m by 1.5 m and a depth of 0.35 m (Matson and Coupland 1995:162, 174-175; Matson 2008b:1, 5, 6). If it was circular in plan, the feature would have been no more than about 6.0 m in diameter.

The feature dates to about 3000 BP based on a date of 3010±85 BP (3191 Cal BP) (WSU-4246) derived from charcoal found in the immediately superior fill layer and a stratigraphically adjacent charcoal sample dated to 3060 ± 80 BP (3256 Cal BP) (SFU-727).

Floor deposits contain crushed bay mussel (*Mytilus trossulus*) and large quantities of ash and fire-cracked rock (Matson 2008b:7; Matson and Coupland 1995:175). No post molds or hearth features were encountered during the excavation. While Johnstone (2003:110) argued this feature does not represent a domestic structure based on the scale of the excavation and absence of post molds, Matson (2008b:7-10) defends his functional interpretation based on the presence of similar features, also interpreted to be domestic structures, at Sequim (Morgan 1999) and on Decatur Island (Walker 2003) in Washington State.

The feature is thought to have sheltered a nuclear family, employing a light superstructure, perhaps cedar bark cladding (Matson 2008b:7).

St. Mungo Cannery Site (DgRr-2)

The St. Mungo Cannery site is located on the Fraser River immediately south of Annacis Island in the community of Delta, B.C. Although the current site setting is riverine, it lies at the interface between the Surrey Uplands and deltaic deposits. During its occupation during the Middle Period (6000 to 3000 years BP), the site was located on a point bar where a now abandoned distributary channel system of the Fraser River turned sharply south to discharge into Boundary Bay (Hutchinson et al. 1995).

The most intensive excavations undertaken at the St. Mungo Cannery site were conducted in 1982 and 1983 in response to construction of the Annacis Island Highway Crossing. A 190 m long trench was excavated by backhoe around the study area perimeter and five wide area excavation blocks of midden totalling 36 m³ were excavated stratigraphically and water-screened. Organic samples from the cultural deposits were radiocarbon dated from 3370 to 4480 BP (Ham et al. 1986).

In all, as many as 23 house components were excavated, being identified on the basis of well-defined thin house floors composed of shell (*Mytilus* sp.), silt, and ash and post molds and hearths (Ham et al. 1986:80, 182, 202). Dimensions of stratigraphically lower houses were estimated to have been 4.5 by 4 m, and more recent upper houses in excess of 6 by 4 m (Ham et al. 1986:85).

A total of 462 post mold features were recorded, with the majority (76%) representing the remains of drying and smoking frames as well as house support poles (2 to 10 cm diameter). The balance of the post molds are thought to represent vertical support posts for house frames (11 to 25 cm diameter). Ham et al. (2006:84, 182-183) also describe 16 large (26 to 80 cm diameter) post molds seen in trench profiles, and they were considered large enough to have been permanent house support posts.

There was no evidence for midden mounding around the periphery of house exteriors, bench construction stake molds along the inside of house walls, or artificial rain water drainage channels (Ham et al. 1986:199).

The earliest date obtained for a house floor and hearth layers at the St. Mungo Cannery site is 4480 ± 90 BP (5125 Cal BP) (WSU-2857) based on a charcoal sample. It was concluded that the St. Mungo Cannery site houses were not permanently occupied; rather, they were used seasonally (Ham et al. 1986:85, 114, 183, 199).

Discussion

This review of confirmed and putative early dwelling structures and related features in the Lower Fraser River Region clearly indicates there is a paucity of information for houses from this time period, with the best data sets associated with the Maurer site (House Structure 1) and *Xá:ytem* (House Structure 1). The St. Mungo Cannery site has the potential to provide a greater understanding of houses from this time period, but a detailed analysis and summary of structural features remains to be completed. Other house structure examples have some feature data, but possess limited interpretive value. Comparative structural feature information is presented in Table 1.

With exception of an anomalous suspect date of 10077 Cal BP from House Structure 2 at *Xá:ytem*, early houses in the Lower Fraser River Region have been radiocarbon dated between 3108 and 5801 Cal BP (Figure 4). In terms of sequence, there are simply too few sites for robust patterning to emerge. Early and late radiocarbon dates are associated with light frame constructions (*Xá:ytem* House Structure 4 and Crescent Beach). Post-frame construction dwellings at Maurer, *Xá:ytem*, *Qithyil*, and St. Mungo Cannery range from 5520 to 3108 Cal BP and the age of the solitary “true” pithouse at *Ly’oythel* falls within the same range. These habitation structure types mirror those described in ethnographic accounts (Barnett 1944, 1955; Duff 1952) and suggest continuity and longevity of house form types that are adapted to social and economic requirements. Variation in the archaeological record may also reflect seasonal differences.

The presence of truly complex structures circa 5800-5500 Cal BP likely signifies a rise in population and the emergence of the Developed Northwest Coast Pattern (Mason 1994). This includes ascribed social status differences, large permanent winter households and villages, and a logistically organized economy, usually centered on stored resources (Ames and Maschner 1999; Matson and Coupland 1995). Much attention has focused on these aspects of Coast Salish culture, and understanding the emergence and nature of domestic space is an important facet of this research.

Despite the great promise associated with the investigation of early house structures in the Lower Fraser River Region, researchers are confronted with the reality that these features are rare, hard to identify in the field, and expensive to investigate. They are large and often deeply buried due to their antiquity and environmental setting. With the exception of the Crescent Beach site, which is located at the toe of a headland adjacent to a marine spit, most house

Table 1. Early Lower Fraser Region house characteristics based on existing evidence.

| Traits/ Characteristics | Site / House Structure | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| | Maurer Structure 1 | Maurer Structure 2 | Iy'oythel | Xá:ytem Structure 1 | Xá:ytem Structure 2 | Xá:ytem Structure 3 | Xá:ytem Structure 4 | Qithyil | Crescent Beach | St. Mungo Cannery |
| Post Construction | Y | Y | N | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | Y |
| Vertical Walls | Y | Y | N | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | Y |
| Angled Walls | N | N | Y | N | N | N | Y | N | Y | N |
| Interior Bench | N | N | N | N | N | Y | Y | Y | N | N |
| Retaining Walls | Y | N | N | Y | N | N | Y | N | N | Y |
| Prepared Clay Floor | N | N | N | N | N | N | Y | Y | N | N |
| Hearth | Y | N | Y | Y | N | N | N | N | N | Y |
| Drainage Ditch | N | N | N | Y | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Excavated | Y | N | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N |
| Excavated into Slope | N | N | N | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | N |
| Length (m) | 7.5 | - | 6.0 | 9.5 | - | - | 4.5+ | - | 4.0+ | 4.5 to 6.0 |
| Width (m) | 5.0 | - | 6.0 | 7.5 | - | - | 3.5 | 4.0 | 1.5 | 4.0 |
| Depth (m) | 0.3 to 0.4 | - | 1.0 | ~1.0 | - | - | - | - | 0.35 | - |
| Floor Area (m ²) | 37.5 | - | - | 71.25 | - | - | 15.75+ | - | 6.0+ | 18.0 to 24.0 |

(-) = Unknown.

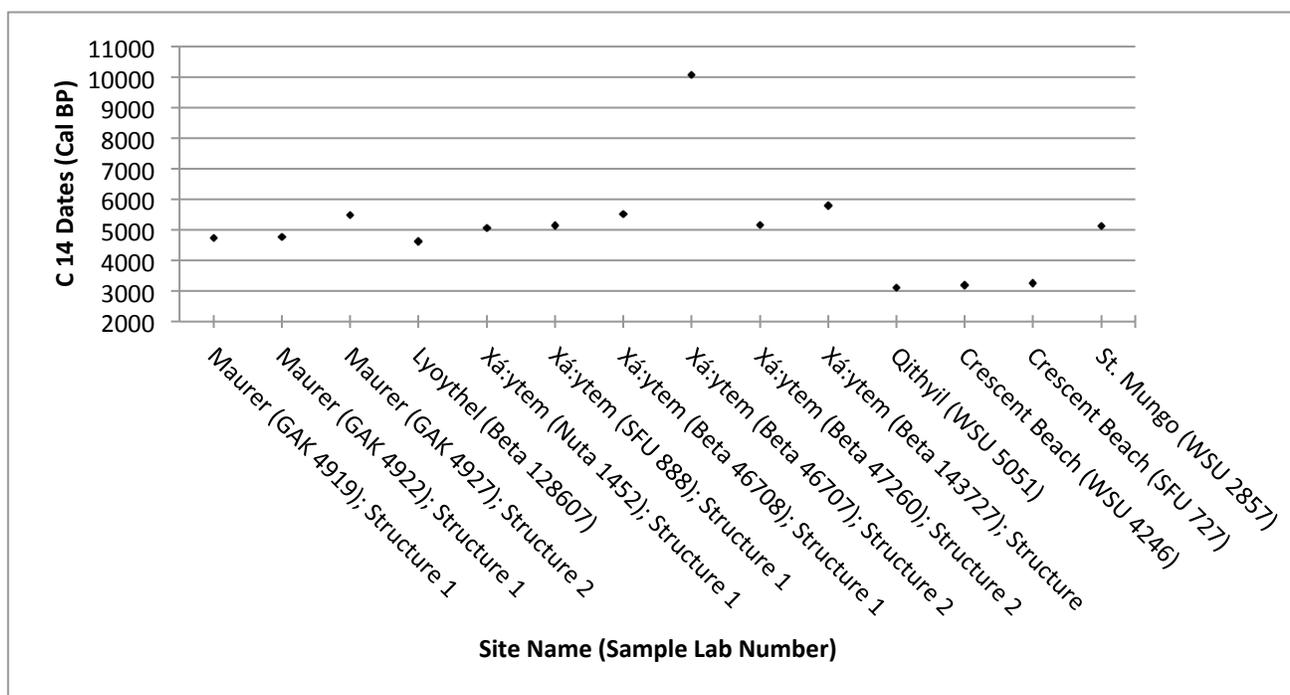


Figure 10. Radiocarbon dates from early houses in the Lower Fraser River Region.

structures have been found on raised ground adjacent to rivers. This common trait suggests well-drained river banks or beachfronts, particularly those near river confluences, may be the best locations to prospect for eroding house structure deposits.

While the archaeological community waits for additional discoveries, further work could be undertaken at *Xá:ytem* (House Structures 1, 2 and 3), cultural depression 3 at *Iy'oythel*, Crescent Beach, and House Structure 4 at *Qithyil*. Data from the St. Mungo Cannery site could be re-examined and reported in full. The opportunity for further investigations at the Maurer site has been lost to site erosion and land development (Lepofsky et al. 2009:607). In the interim, researchers interested in the origin and development of houses in this region will need to rely on existing information and on data gathered from adjacent regions (Johnstone 2003) and later time periods (Matson 2003; Grier 2006a, 2006b).

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