



Category: 1a Unique

Name: Dugout canoe

Location: Prince Albert

Species: N/A



History/Description:

This Dugout Canoe is on Display in the Connaught Room of the Prince Albert Historical Museum.

These dugouts were made by Indians in the central areas of North America and are unique in that they only have one end raised. The occupants would kneel in the front and paddle or pole their way across the water. Their weight would raise the back end out of the water. The inland Indians are more usually associated with canoes covered with animal skin or birch bark; not many know they were also in the dugout business.

In 1931 this specimen was dug out of the soil in a creek that flowed out of Christopher Lake, 40 kilometres North of Prince Albert. Tom Johnson and his brother Joe Johnson, the owners of the property, were deepening the creek bed to allow more flow from the lake when they came upon the dugout. It was felt necessary to lower the lake level as the lake at this time was right up to the

tree line.

No one knew how unique this find was until some researchers from Chicago visited the museum. They had contacted hundreds of museums in Canada and the United States and as far as is known, this is the only such dugout canoe in existence today.

At one time, (before people unknowingly picked at it) tow holes could be seen at the front. A stick would be slid through these holes and used to pull the dugout up on shore. One hole is still visible on the left side. Since they would be very prone to tipping, they were likely used only for short trips across a river or small lake. This article donated to the Prince Albert Historical Society by Tom and Joe Johnson.

Barry Johnson, retired Fireman and son of either Ron or Tom Johnson, provided the information to the P.A. Historical Museum, and he also designed the display sign that sits next to it.

Nominated By: Murray Little

Comments or additional information can be sent to: info@whitebirch.ca