

Preliminary report on Japanese house fragment found on Cape B Beach, Makah Reservation

June 17, 2012 - The Ikkatsu Expedition, a project that is using sea kayaks to survey the remote beaches of the Olympic Peninsula, is currently underway. On June 12, 2012, in the process of inspecting Cape B Beach, about 2 ½ miles north of Hobuck Beach, expedition members came across the remains of what is almost certainly a portion of a house that was taken out to sea by the Japanese tsunami of March 11, 2011.

Although the entire beach was strewn with flotsam, including fishing floats and other plastic containers, our first indication of house-related debris were the scattered pieces of lumber we found near the south end of the beach. The dimensions were metric and each piece was stamped with a black mill stamp, but the first pieces were blurry and difficult to read. Eventually we came across a piece that was clearer and we were able to make out the letters “JP” and a serial number “5501128.” (That number has since been traced to a mill in Osaka, the Diawa Pallet Housou Co.)

As we moved north up the beach, the amount of lumber increased steadily, until we found a debris pile that contained a large number of individual pieces of lumber mixed with driftwood and seaweed. Gradually we found other items as well: large pieces of a broken plastic laundry hamper, individual glass bottles containing residue of what smelled like cherry cough syrup and another plastic bottle that was almost full of what appeared to be iodine. There was also a portion of a child’s potty seat, the pink plastic bowl, that did not have identifying markings but had survived intact. We also came across pieces of a washing machine (the front panel and the rusted hulk of the electric motor), and a red kerosene container which were located near the pile.

The beach down from the pile location is characterized by an extensive rocky reef, much of which is exposed at low tide and covered when the tide is higher. The way the debris is distributed would seem to indicate that the house fragment, which appears – from the nature of the items found – to have been the bathroom, arrived here intact, then was broken on the rocks by the wave action. Over time, the bulk of the debris has been carried to the high tide line and individual pieces have been carried south along the beach by the shore current.

Because the Ikkatsu team is comprised of three people, we did not have the time nor the equipment that would have enabled us to completely excavate the debris pile. It seems possible that more identifiable items could be found if enough people and gear were dedicated to the process.

Images





N 48° 23.351"
W 124° 39.804"

06/10/12



N 48° 23.351"
W 124° 39.804"

06/10/12



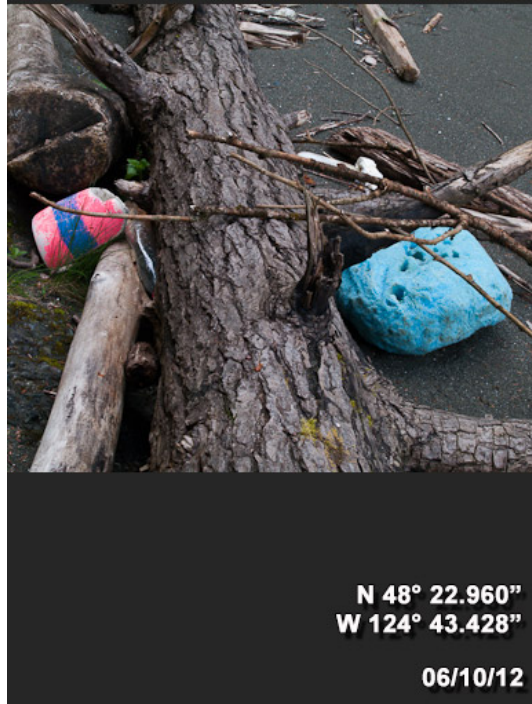
N 48° 23.351"
W 124° 39.804"

06/10/12



N 48° 23.134"
W 124° 43.467"

06/10/12





N 48° 22.960"
W 124° 43.428"

06/10/12



N 48° 23.134"
W 124° 43.467"

06/11/12



N 48° 22.960"
W 124° 43.428"

06/10/12



N 48° 23.565"
W 124° 44.151"

06/11/12



N 48° 23.565"
W 124° 44.151"

06/11/12



N 48° 23.565"
W 124° 44.151"

06/11/12



N 48° 23.565"
W 124° 44.151"

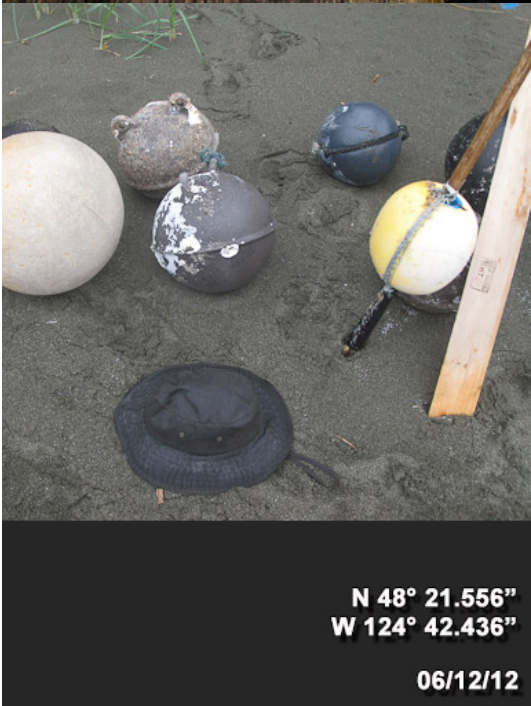
06/11/12



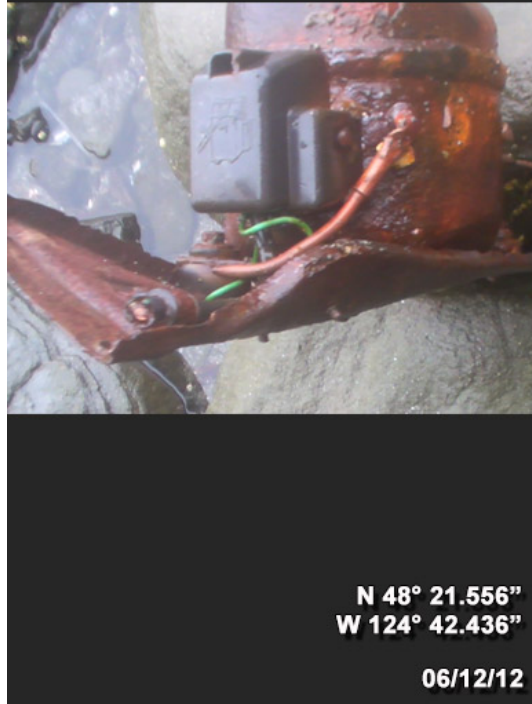
N 48° 23.565"
W 124° 44.151"

06/11/12











Ken Campbell
Steve Weileman
Jason Goldstein
<http://ikkatsu.wordpress.com>