



## PRESS RELEASE

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### New Exhibit at Suquamish Museum Features Old Man House Archaeology

**SUQUAMISH, WA- July 12, 2014** T The Suquamish Museum announces the opening of a new exhibit *45-KP-2: The Archaeology of Old Man House*. An opening reception for the exhibit will be held July 25, 2014 at 4:30 p.m. The exhibit, created by Suquamish Museum Archivist and Curator Lydia Sigo, is based upon the work performed by Suquamish Tribal Chairman Leonard Forsman and Historic Preservation Officer Dennis Lewarch, and the published research by archaeologists at the Burke Museum of Natural History.

A short film about the Old Man House site by Stone Egg Productions accompanies the exhibit as a well as a re-creation of the excavation where children can get a hands on experience with archaeology and learn about different shells and artifacts found at the site.

#### **ABOUT OLD MAN HOUSE**

Old Man House was located at the north end of Agate Pass and stood as the largest longhouse in Puget Sound. It was said to have been built around 1815 and was once home to Chief Seattle and Chief Kitsap, hereditary leaders of the Suquamish Tribe. The longhouse houseposts measured 800 feet, but the enclosure would change size depending on how many families were living there at the time. It was also built as a place for great gatherings and Potlatches and thus served as an important cultural center for the Suquamish Tribe.

Chief Seattle's famous speech foretold challenges for his people and after the signing of the Elliot Bay Treaty in 1855, the federal government outlawed many tribal religious practices and in the 1870s' Old Man House was burned by the order of the local Indian Agent in an attempt to end the tribe's communal lifestyle.

Many Suquamish families continued to live at the village site, illustrated by one of the exhibit photos taken in 1875 (1770), where a post and beam of Old Man House is still visible. The village was broken up in 1906 when the US Army acquired the land in 1904 to build a military base. The families finally had to separate to their own allotments and their central gathering location was gone. The army never built a military base and the land was sold to developers for beach front summer homes. In 1950 Washington Parks and Recreation bought a vacant acre that was a part of where Old Man House once stood to turn into a park.

#### **ABOUT 45-KP-2**

45-KP-2 refers to the Smithsonian trinomial system for archaeology sites that are composed of a number code for the state(45 for WA) letters for the county within the state (Kitsap), and sequential digits representing the order the site was listed in that county(2). This code was given to the site during the first scientific excavations done in 1950 and 1951 by Warren Snyder who lead a group of students from the University of Washington. The excavation showed evidence of thousands of years of occupation and yielded hundreds of artifacts

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including ancient tools made of bone, stone and antler, a bone pendant and comb and more recent artifacts such as a pipe, glass and ceramic fragments from Hudson's Bay Company in the mid to late 1800's.

With the completion of the Tribe's new Museum in 2012, it was time for the artifacts to return home from the Burke Museum at the University of Washington. In October of 2013, the artifacts were crossing Puget Sound on their return to Suquamish, a pod of Orcas surrounded the ferry boat, welcoming the artifacts home.

The exhibit is scheduled to be showcased until October 20, 2014. Standard museum admission rates apply. For more information, including hours of operation and prices visit the Suquamish Museum online at [www.suquamish.org](http://www.suquamish.org)

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