ARCTIC
VOL. 75, NO.1 (MARCH 2022) P. 140–142
https://doi.org/10.14430/arctic74940

# JACQUES CINQ-MARS (1942–2021)

Jacques Cinq-Mars was one of the cohort of archaeologists attending the University of Wisconsin Madison in the 1960s who were the vanguard of archaeological research in northern Canada and Alaska. Among Jacques' contemporaries were W.N. (Bill) Irving, Donald W. Clark, Richard Morlan, William B. Workman, Roger Powers, and Anne Shinkwin who, along with Jacques, established the baseline for our understanding of archaeology in the North American Arctic and Subarctic.

Jacques began work in the Yukon as a doctoral student in 1966 as part of the crew for Bill Irving's excavations at the late prehistoric village site of Klo-kut, upriver of the village of Old Crow on the Porcupine River. Irving's Yukon research was supported by the National Museum of Man, and his crew that summer also included Lazarus Charlie, B. Charlie, and J. Joe from Old Crow. This was the summer National Museum of Nature palaeontologist C.R. (Dick) Harington and Peter Lord from Old Crow discovered a caribou tibia flesher along the Old Crow River dated subsequently to approximately 27,000 years BP (the flesher has since been re-dated to 1350 BP). Jacques returned with Irving and Harington to carry out survey in the Old Crow and Porcupine River basins in 1967 along with Lazarus Charlie and Abraham Peter from Old Crow. In 1968 Jacques assisted fellow University of Wisconsin student Dick Morlan in the excavations at Klo-kut, which was to form the basis of Morlan's PhD dissertation. Between 1969 and 1971, supported by the National Museum of Man and along with Bill Irving and Dick Morlan, Jacques was involved in reconnaissance and excavation in the northern Yukon and reported on a survey he carried out on the upper Porcupine River. It was during this period that Jacques and his archaeological colleagues developed the lifelong collaborations and friendships with people from Old Crow who were guides, teachers, and indispensable partners in their research in the decades that followed.

In 1971 Jacques, along with Don Clark of the National Museum of Man, also undertook surveys in the Keele River and Fort Good Hope area and carried out small-scale excavations and surveys in the lake region to the west of the Mackenzie River, including the initial work at Yellow Lake and the identification of the nearby Tertiary Hills clinker source (welded tuff in the contemporary reports). Research in northern Yukon and the Mackenzie Valley accelerated in 1972, with additional funding support from the Government of Canada Task Force on Northern Oil Development, to address the impacts of proposed oil and gas pipeline development on the Mackenzie Corridor and northern Yukon. Jacques was employed by the newly created Archaeological Survey of Canada at the National Museum of Man to head the surveys for the pipeline, which were carried out between 1972 and 1974 and which supported the research efforts of several well-known northern archaeologists including Bryan Gordon, Donald W. Clark, Robert McGhee, and James Millar. These

Jacques Cinq-Mars at Bluefish Caves 1 August 1979 (Photo by Ruth Gotthardt).

were the early days of archaeological impact assessment and mitigation approaches that were being developed in response to large-scale oil and gas and hydro projects. And as it turns out, the field of cultural resource management was to form a thread throughout Jacques' career.

Jacques' research for the Mackenzie Corridor project saw continued work at Yellow Lake and exploratory excavations at two sites on the Porcupine River: the caribou interception site at Rat Indian Creek and the house pit site at Old Chief Creek. Additional survey and excavation were again carried out along the Mackenzie Mountain foothills north of the Keele River and along the Mackenzie River between Norman Wells and the mouth of the Redstone River. Jacques undertook survey in the Travaillant Lake/Sandy Lake area in 1973, and together with Paul Donahue, surveyed the terrace systems around the Old Crow and Porcupine River confluence and continued excavations at Old Chief Creek. A brief survey was also made on the Yukon Coastal Plain between the Babbage River and the Malcolm River where several tent ring sites were identified. Caribou fences were documented for the first time along the northern fringe of the Old Crow Flats with the assistance of E. de Bock of the Canadian Wildlife Service.

Jacques' work at Yellow Lake and at the Tertiary Hills clinker sources in the early 1970s should be singled out for particular attention as these were the subject of his doctoral dissertation. The Yellow Lake assemblage comprised blade, microblade, and lanceolate point technology made from Tertiary Hills clinker. The extensive distribution of Tertiary Hills clinker on sites in Yukon, the Mackenzie Corridor, and in northern Alberta was a specific focus of the research. At a number of these sites, clinker was recovered in components dating to the early to mid-Holocene, which had interesting implications for understanding manifestations of the Northwest Microblade Tradition and early networks of trade and travel. Jacques' PhD dissertation, although completed, was never brought forward for defence.

In 1975 Jacques and Bill Irving secured Canada Council funding for the 5-year, multi-disciplinary Northern Yukon Research Program (NYRP) based at the University of Toronto. The NYRP coordinated the investigations of geologists, botanists, palaeontologists, and archaeologists to set the stage for understanding the early human colonization of Eastern Beringia and the history of human occupation since deglaciation. In Jacques' view, palaeoenvironmental and geological information were of critical important for the interpretation of the archaeological record. Jacques was Associate Director and Co-Principal Investigator of NYRP until 1979. While at the University of Toronto, Jacques also held a half-time appointment as Lecturer in the Department of Anthropology. In Jacques' classes, students were introduced to European approaches to the analysis and interpretation of stone tool technology. The first lesson in his classes always required students to make a technical drawing of an artefact thereby ensuring the object had undergone the closest possible examination.

While Bill Irving concentrated on the search for evidence of early human occupations along the Old Crow River, Jacques' research for NYRP focussed on survey in the uplands around the Old Crow Basin at sites such as K Ridge and Dog Creek, which were producing evidence of human occupations spanning the Holocene and possibly extending to the late Pleistocene. As well, Jacques mentored graduate students beginning their independent research: Ron McFee (and later Terry Alldritt) mapping and recording caribou fences on the northern margins of Crow Flats and Raymond Le Blanc excavating at Rat Indian Creek in the middle reaches of the Porcupine River. Jacques was also responsible for providing several undergraduates with the opportunity to begin their careers in archaeology in northern Yukon. Sheila Greer, Ruth Gotthardt, Ellen Badone, Jane and Joan Dale, and Tom Andrews all benefitted from an unparalleled education in Subarctic archaeology at a wide range of northern sites including the Old Chief house pits, the caribou interception site of Rat Indian Creek, the windswept ancient lithic sites in the uplands north of Crow Flats, and at Bluefish Caves.

It was in the first field season of the Northern Yukon Research Program in 1975, during a brief helicopter survey by Jacques, Bill Irving, Raymond Le Blanc, and Lazarus Charlie, that Bluefish Caves were discovered. Bluefish Caves were to profoundly shape the direction of Jacques' professional career in the subsequent decades.

Jacques excavated at the Bluefish Caves from 1977 to 1979 as part of the Northern Yukon Research Program; it was in the course of these excavations that the evidence of very ancient human presence at the caves began to be uncovered. In 1979 Jacques accepted the positions of Head of the Rescue Archaeology Programme and Curator of Boreal Forest Archaeology at the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC). He continued his research at Bluefish Caves under the auspices of the CMC. Modified bone recovered from extensive bone beds at the site returned dates of 24,000 BP sparking both tremendous interest and considerable controversy in the archaeological community. To address the questions around the Bluefish Caves evidence, Jacques sought the input and assistance of many experts in the fields of archaeology, geomorphology, palynology, and palaeontology, including a group of Russian archaeologists led by Anatoly Derevyanko who visited the excavations at Bluefish Caves in 1983.

The acrimonious debate surrounding the Bluefish dates and Jacques' interpretations, however, discouraged the CMC from funding further research, and Jacques' work at the caves was halted in 1987. Support for Jacques' interpretations of Bluefish Caves came some thirty years later. Lauriane Bourgeon, a PhD candidate from University of Montreal, completed a re-dating and re-examination of modified bone from Bluefish Caves that supported the 24,000-year dates as originally proposed by Jacques. Bluefish Caves remains the subject of debate but is being given renewed consideration in the search for early human presence in the Americas.

Although research at Bluefish Caves was halted, Jacques recognized the immense potential of frozen caves in northern Yukon to contain the evidence of late Pleistocene human occupation. With Jacques' encouragement and partnership, University of Ottawa geologists Bernard Lauriol and Ian Clark began a multi-year program of research at caves in the Bear Cave Mountain region of northern Yukon spanning the period 1984–2000. For Jacques, the objective was to locate cave sites like the Bluefish Caves. At the same time, Jacques asked Bernard Lauriol to establish the chronology of the fluvial terraces of the Porcupine River downstream of the Bluefish Basin in hopes that these localities might have preserved traces of human occupation contemporary with Bluefish. Disappointingly, investigations of the caves and the terraces did not identify any sites dating to the late glacial period. The oldest terraces date back 16,000 years, and the caves are in areas that were probably too dry to support much plant or animal life during the last ice age. The Bear Cave Mountain region is of considerable cultural importance to the people of Old Crow, and throughout the investigations Jacques ensured elders and students from Old Crow remained fully involved in the fieldwork. Under the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Land Claim, this region, called Ni'iinlii-njik, was established as a Yukon Territorial Park and Habitat Protection Area in 2004.

In the mid-1980s, Jacques also re-engaged in the field of cultural resource management by coordinating research and inventories in the Beaufort, Mackenzie Valley, and Lancaster Sound regions for the CMC as part of their involvement in the Northern Oil and Gas Action Plan Archaeology Project (NOGAP). The first four years of the project (1985–88) focussed on broad-scale site inventories. Between 1990 and 1994, the work shifted to testing and excavation of particular sites and the analysis and publication of these results. Importantly, the NOGAP also undertook to develop capacity in heritage management in the northern territories and promoted more formal

approaches to researcher consultation and involvement with First Nations communities.

Although Jacques was transferred to the position of Curator of Quebec Archaeology in 1991**,** he continued to be involved in research in the Yukon. In 1996, together with Raymond Le Blanc at the University of Alberta, Jacques was expanding survey in the region east of the Crow Flats and in the Richardson Mountain foothills. In 1997 sites in the Fishing Branch and Bear Cave Mountain area were revisited to assist in protected area planning and planning for future archaeological research in cave settings in this region.

In 1996 the Government of Yukon undertook to develop a new interpretive centre focussing on the Beringian history of Yukon and the pivotal research being done in the territory to understand human migrations into North America. Jacques' research at Bluefish Caves was featured prominently in the Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre (YBIC). A near full-sized replica of Cave I was constructed, recreating the activities of human hunters that might have occurred there more than 20,000 years ago. Jacques became a major contributor to the exhibits developed at the centre and to the film that was produced as part of the YBIC's public interpretation of the story of Beringia. It was characteristic of Jacques that he framed the First People exhibit at the YBIC in the context of global human history, drawing attention to the key role of art, symbolic communication, and storytelling in enabling small dispersed human groups to adapt to the high latitudes of Northeast Asia and Northwest North America.

Jacques' abiding interest in the nature of the early human dispersals into the Western Hemisphere led him to collaborate with European scholars from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s. A particular focus was the symbolic art of the European and Siberian Palaeolithic. In 1995 Jacques mounted a major exhibit at the CMC entitled, "Mothers of Time" featuring Upper Palaeolithic figurines originating from the Balzi Rossi (Grimaldi) caves in Italy. In Jacques' view and that of his colleagues, the "Venus" figurines, which appear in sites throughout Europe and east into Siberia, were indicators of the advanced symbolic communication, which enabled the cultures of the late ice age to expand into new regions. More particularly germane to the interpretation of the Bluefish Caves evidence, Jacques pursued the evidence from European and Eurasian Palaeolithic sites for the use and modification of mammoth bone.

Jacques retired from the CMC in 2002 but continued to publish and passed the torch, so to speak, to students pursuing further studies at Dog Creek and Bluefish Caves. With his long-time friend and colleague, Raymond Le Blanc, Jacques authored his final publication in 2008 on a question the two had debated for years. Using an experimental approach, Ray and Jacques addressed the question of adze-cut stumps in the archaeological record and resolved that antler wedges could have been used in combination with a stone adze to chop down a tree.

Jacques' friends and extended family knew him as an avid reader and having a passion for the arts. His grandfather, Alonzo Cinq-Mars, was a multi-disciplinary artist, known for his bronze sculptures, poetry, journalistic writings, and keen eye for the arts in general. Unsurprisingly, Jacques' father, Marc, was a great artist as well; he was a painter who became one of the great industrial architects of his time. Jacques' creativity inclined to writing and photography and in later years, to wood working. In the early 2000s he started building replicas of traditional wooden boats which culminated in the construction of a traditional maritime sailing dory.

Jacques was predeceased by his parents Marc Cinq-Mars and Gilberte Lamarres and is survived by his wife Andrée Favre, sons Marc and Eric, five grandchildren, and younger siblings Louis, Claude, and Jean Cinq-Mars. Jacques passed away 28 November 2021 in Montreal.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful for assistance from Thomas D. Andrews, Raymond J. Le Blanc, Jane Dale, Robert McGhee, Patricia Sutherland, Ingrid Kritsch, Bernard Lauriol, and Eric Cinq-Mars in writing this obituary.

*Ruth M. Gotthardt*
*Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada*
*rmgotthardt@gmail.com*