

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

HIGH ARCTIC NEWS

In a truly inexhaustive survey conducted in January 1989, Réal Tookalook took a real look at Northern Museums. His initial results (since validated in museums world-wide) point to the possibility that if museums in the High Arctic were kept at 20°C, 150 lux and 50% RH during the winter it would be warmer, brighter and more humid than outside.

An artifact found at an abandoned Thule site on Baffin Island has been submitted to the CCI labs for conservation/restoration. As discovered, the artifact was in a bad state of repair, exhibiting extensive cracking and dislocation of the constituent pieces (Fig. 1). Infrared and ultraviolet spectroscopic analysis revealed that the object was fabricated from a compacted, six-fold symmetric material which undergoes a degradative phase change at 0°C in its pure state. The head-dress was at first believed to date from the Early Bronze Age, but an intensive catalogue search proved it to be from the Late Aluminum Age - Sears Catalogue (gardens section) Fall/Winter 1981.

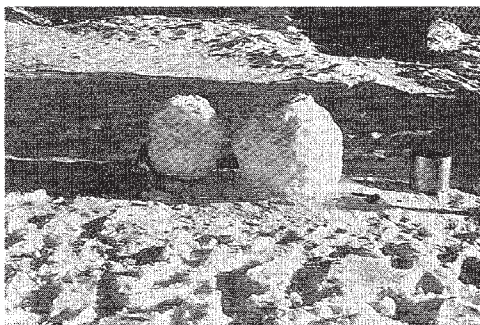


Fig.1 The sculpture as found.



Fig. 2 The sculpture after restoration.

(Photos courtesy of CCI (Centre for Conservation of Ice).

Although it was not obvious what the object was meant to depict, the head-dress is reminiscent of Christian head-gear of the Viking Age. The piece was successfully restored (see glasses in Fig. 2) and consilydated as being from 3:18 pm on March 15th 300 BC (approximately). The sculpture is now on permanent display in the entrance foyer of the Canadian Museum of People Who Live in Towns at an average temperature of -5°C.

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