

# A Last Look at Thomas Tower's Collection from Malaga Cove, Los Angeles County

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## Abstract

A recent run of *PCAS Quarterly* articles resurrects interest in the artifacts, written records, and photographs generated by Thomas Tower I's excavations at CA-LAN-138. The present essay becomes a final installment in these studied attentions to the relic collector's Malaga Cove discoveries.

Descriptions and discussions of artifacts and features offered herein and not previously published enables further characterizations of lifeways attendant to the Angeles Pattern of the Del Rey Tradition. From among the numerous past behaviors reflected in these additional data, at least three are anticipated to be of special interest to readers: the caching together of three ceramic anthropomorphs within a mortuary feature; the manufacture of an incredibly tiny serpentine cup of exquisite symmetry and design, merely ca. 18 mm in height and ca. 38 mm in diameter; the employments of tools having probable Northwest Coast provenance.

## Introduction

Renewed interest in Thomas Tower I's decades-past artifact collecting at the Malaga Cove site (CA-LAN-138) (Figure 1) generated familiar but also new information to better characterize the now mostly destroyed archaeological site (e.g., Hunter and Koerper 2014; Koerper, Hunter, and Snyder 2014; Koerper and Peterson 2014; Koerper and Cramer 2014; Koerper, Hunter et al. 2014; Koerper, Snyder et al. 2014). The database for recent interest in Tower's LAN-138 activities draws from several sources: artifacts loaned by the Tower family to the Point Vicente Interpretive Center (PVIC), Rancho Palos Verdes; early 1940s photographs showing many of Tower's finds; handwritten correspondence to Southwest Museum archaeologists

(Tower 1940–1941); a typed manuscript (Tower 1942); a “stratigraphic survey” diagram of the site (Tower ca. 1940); and recent photographic documentations and other information supplied the senior author by Thomas Tower III, custodian of the Malaga Cove artifacts not on loan to the PVIC but rather held out-of-state.

Those parts of Tower's (1942) manuscript especially useful to the continuing study of the Malaga Cove site are narrowly focused on the collector's so-called “grouped finds.” For each “grouped find” Tower listed artifacts, but with limited descriptive content. All but one of the 12 “grouped finds” were archaeological features, nine of them mortuary related. The “grouped finds” almost certainly reflect activities that initiated in that cultural stratum labeled Level 2 by Edwin Walker (1937, 1951). The kinds of artifacts confidently attributed to Level 2 together with radiocarbon data generated from Level 2 indicate a robust presence of the Angeles Pattern of the Del Rey Tradition, yet some few Encinitas Tradition artifacts seem to be present (Koerper and Peterson 2014:49, 56; see also Sutton and Gardner 2010; Sutton 2010). The collector's efforts probably proceeded exclusively or nearly so within Level 2.

Several circumstances can complicate efforts to match an artifact associated with a particular “grouped find” to an artifact seen in one or more photographs (those taken by the grandfather and those taken much later by the grandson) or an artifact that can be accessed at the PVIC. For instance, Tower omitted from his lists

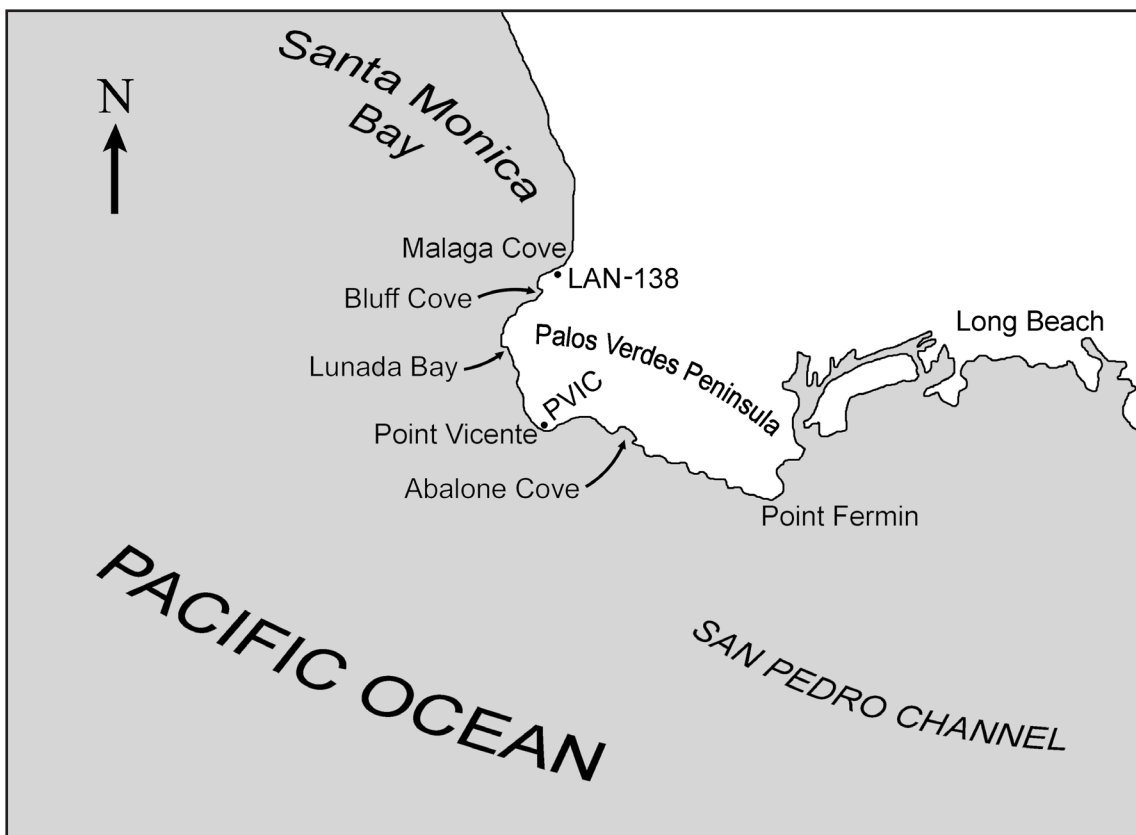


Figure 1. Location map.

any item he did not consider a “perfect piece.” His artifact descriptions are generally quite spare. Tower’s manuscript did not document those artifacts lacking “grouped find” provenance.

The contents of five of Tower’s “grouped finds” (Nos. 1, 3, 6, 8, and 12) were covered in the several *PCAS Quarterly* articles cited above. The first purpose of the present essay is to report on the remaining “grouped finds” (Nos. 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, and 11). Secondly, illustrations of some previously unpublished artifacts will be shared with readers. These include artifacts on permanent loan from the Tower family to the PVIC and additional specimens in the care of grandson Thomas Tower III. A majority of these artifacts cannot be assigned to a “grouped find.”

### Seven Additional “Grouped Finds”

#### *Find No. 2*

Following Edwin Walker’s counsel, Tower referred to Find No. 2 as the “Shoshone Reburial.” The human remains were placed in a hole dug into Level 2 but partially descending into Level 1. An inverted metate sitting over two steatite “cooking bowls,” both broken but with all pieces present, lay above the reburial’s few bones, among which were a short flint knife and two arrowheads. Three ceramic figurines were associated with the bowls, apparently stuck to some asphaltum within the bowls. One wonders why Tower thought the bowls were used for cooking when they contained some amount of black tar.

Tower was especially thrilled with the fired clay figurines, personally taking them to the Southwest Museum for Mark Harrington and Edwin Walker to examine (T. Tower to M. Harrington and E. Walker 12 June 1940, Walker Notebook, Vol. 1, Braun Library, Autry National Center, Los Angeles).

Tower referred to the three figurines as "Spirits." They could not be located, but Tower's (1942) manuscript provides some useful description; all three appear lined up together among a large display of artifacts (see Koerper and Peterson 2014:Figure 5, top shelf, middle; also Koerper, Hunter, and Snyder 2014:Figure 7). The tallest was described as 2.5 in (6.4 cm) high, and the other two measured 1.75 in (4.4 cm) tall. All were crafted absent arms and legs. The heads and necks together have shapes that reminded the finder of "saddle horns." They have "shoulders," and breasts are appended to each torso. The distal extremity is a bulbous element, perhaps symbolizing pregnancy (see True et al. 1974:67; Freeman and Van Horn 1990:30–31). According to Tower, there are designs on each that were produced when a sharp pointed instrument was pressed into wet clay. From the imperfect photographic record and Tower's descriptions, one of us (JC) produced rough illustrations of all three (Figure 2). One speculates these figurines were intended to communicate life-force meaning involving fertility, fecundity, increase, and/or Nature's bounty. If not manufactured locally, we suspect they originated in Luiseño or Cahuilla territory.

#### **Find No. 4**

Find No. 4, a mortuary related feature, is detailed in a letter (T. Tower to E. Walker 20 May 1941, Walker Notebook Vol. 1, Braun Research Library, Autry National Center, Los Angeles) and in Tower's (1942) manuscript. The flexed interment occurred during an occupation of Level 2, but the grave had been excavated into the underlying Level 1 whose

sediments Tower characterized as "very hard reddish brown sandy soil, clay" (see Koerper and Peterson 2014:43, Figure 3) and what Walker (1951:32, Figure 5) characterized as "yellow detritus." The bones were largely disintegrating, and the skull was missing, the consequence of another artifact hunter's earlier trenching.

An oblong-shaped, sandstone bowl sat right-side up, about where the hands of the deceased would have been. Tower characterized the bowl as "age cracked" and with some sort of "replacement" for the bottom that had once broken out. Five inches deep, and perhaps "7+ in by 8+ in," this receptacle held an amazing variety of offerings including what was probably a *Laevicardium elatum* shell (4.75 in diameter, 2 in depth), which itself held "a small Netsuke or handle fastener rounded and oblong with a deep groove around the center and each end countersunk to a depth of .25 in." Tower drew a sketch (Figure 3a) of this beautifully polished, "dark green serpentine" artifact, roughly estimated at 1.5 in long with a 1 in diameter. The shell housed a tiny, exquisitely crafted, thin-walled cup, also of dark green serpentine (Figure 3b). Pleasingly symmetrical and finished to a very high polish, the cup measures only 37–39 mm in diameter, revealing that it is not perfectly round. Minimum and maximum heights are 18 mm and 19 mm. The artifact's rim curves slightly and delicately inward. The level of polish suggests that the final effort employed ash from a fire pit. For south central coastal California, this specimen stands at or very near the apogee of the Native stoneworkers' expertise.

The artifact probably served as a ceremonial/ritual or medicinal cup, possibly a kind of vessel from which was drunk a decoction made from *Datura metaloides* (a.k.a. *D. wrightii*; common names, jimson weed and thorn apple (see e.g., Mead 2003:143–145). Such cups varied in size, some Chumash examples being very small (see Hudson and Blackburn 1986:289–292).

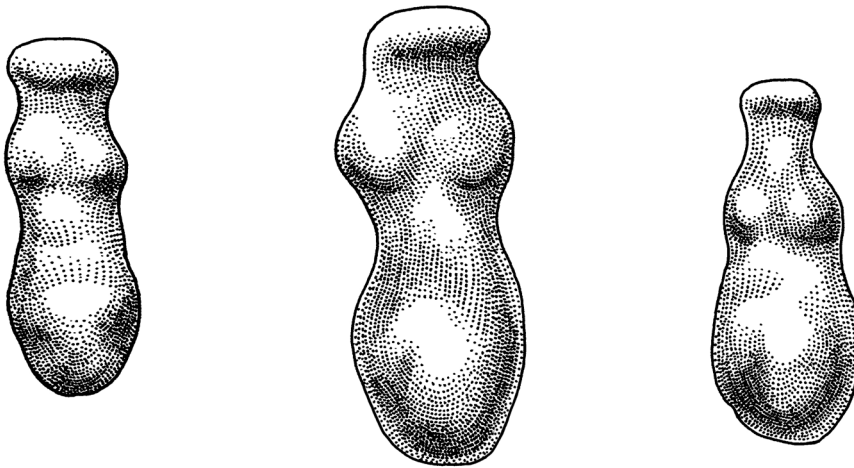


Figure 2. Ceramic figurines associated with a CA-LAN-138 burial feature (Find No. 2). Thomas Tower I noted that each had a different pattern of symmetrical decoration produced by pressing an implement into wet clay. He referred to them as "spirits." Center specimen is ca. 6.5 cm tall; others are ca. 4.4 cm tall.

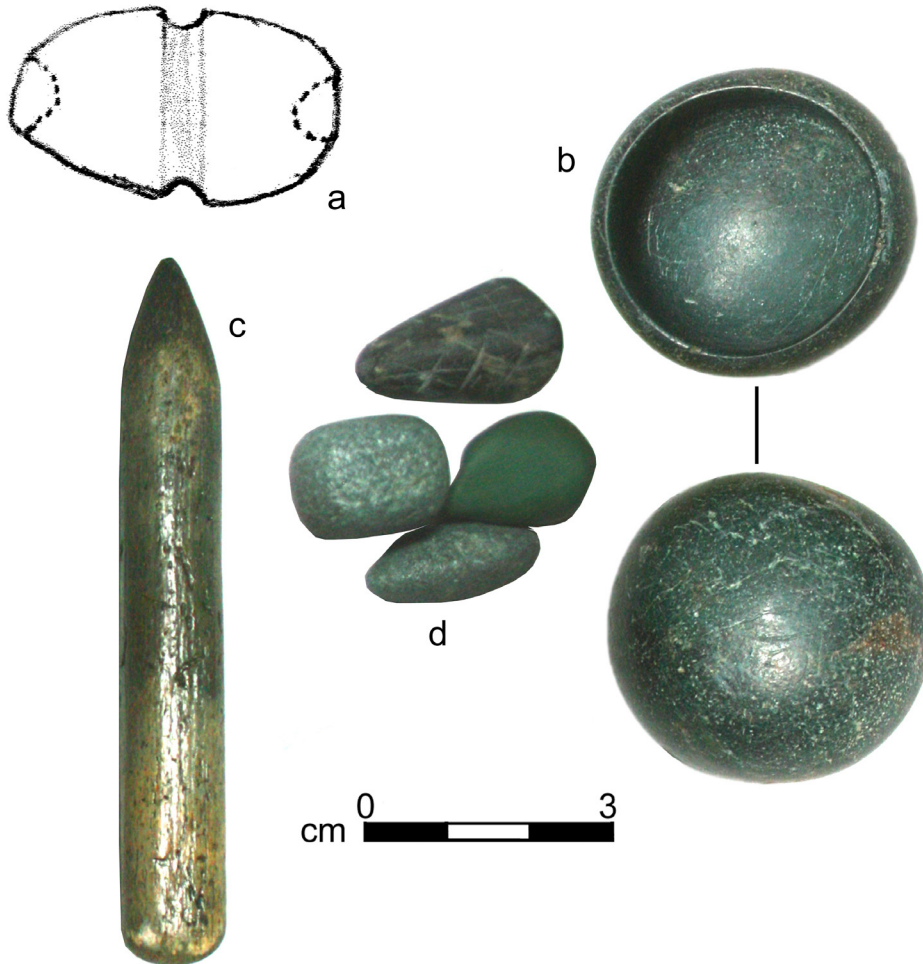


Figure 3. Objects Thomas Tower I found with Find No. 4, a CA-LAN-138 mortuary feature. (a) Tower's sketch of what he called "a small netsuke or handle fastener;" (b) tiny "serpentine" cup; (c) a "pencil shaped" object crafted from mammal bone; (d) four pieces of polished "serpentine." Photographs courtesy of Thomas Tower III. Scale refers to (b), (c), and (d). Size of (a) is only approximate.

The probable giant egg cockle held even more surprises—four small pieces of polished serpentine “of no particular shape” (Figure 3d), two very small quartz crystals, and a steatite bead.

Other objects in the sandstone bowl included several small pieces of burned bone tools, including the “pencil-shaped,” polished worked bone seen in Figure 3c, a “stone gouge,” and an intact “bone awl.” Nearby, but not inside the sandstone bowl, Tower discovered what he believed to be two crude adze-like blades (“tranchets”), a chert knife, a chert spear point, one hammerstone, a fragment of a once highly polished donut stone, and a large “moonstone,” likely a water-worn chalcedony pebble possibly from the Redondo Beach area (see Kunz 1905:71, or Merrill 1916:40).

A “one foot square” slab of slate that had broken into three pieces sat directly over the sandstone bowl. Close above that, in a ca. 3 ft x 4 ft area, was a layer of flat, yellow, friable rock slabs, under which lay midden with numerous pieces of burned, worked bone. Tower lamented to Walker that none of the slabs of stone showed any markings. His disappointment reflected his belief that incised rocks might be a key to ethnic identification.

#### ***Find No. 5***

Tower bestowed a descriptive name on Find No. 5, “Chumash Infant Burial.” Very little bone remained of this interment, which lay at the bottom of a 4 ft thick layer of black soil and in an 18 in x 18 in scooped out hole in the “red sand clay” of Level 1. Here, side by side, sat two steatite bowls, their openings facing down.

The irregularly shaped bowl shown in Figure 4 is the smaller (Specimen TT#4). It weighs 628 g and measures 114 mm long, 86 mm wide, and 52 mm in height. Of average quality grayish steatite, the receptacle has suffered some damage along its rim. Referring

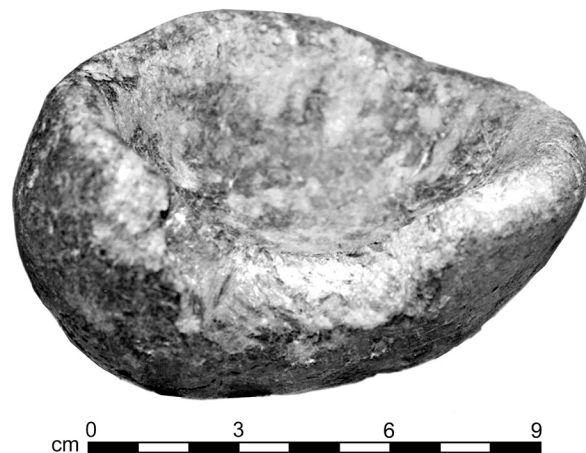


Figure 4. Steatite bowl associated with Tower's Find No. 5, a CA-LAN-138 infant burial.

to its “odd shape,” Tower thought it looked like a lamp. He observed that it was asphaltum daubed. Parenthetically, the artifact appears in a photograph taken by the artifact collector (see Koerper and Peterson 2014:Figure 8, at back of lower step, fourth from right). Beneath this bowl were shell beads. A rock “heavily impregnated with copper” also sat under the bowl.

The other soapstone bowl was described as having inside diameters of 3 in and 4 in and as having a similar asphaltum veneer. Its handle, “just a knob,” was measured as 1.5 in long. A finely crafted bone awl sat underneath this second container. Nearby lay a three-pronged deer antler, which immediately broke apart on handling.

#### ***Find No. 7***

Tower provided spare description of his Find No. 7. From Level 2, a grave had been dug into the “hard red sand clay” of Level 1. In it lay a degraded skeleton, fully extended and face down. Mortuary furniture included “two small steatite bowls, one steatite pipe, one steatite cooking slab, two stone hair ornaments, one piece of steatite with markings, one small piece of

obsidian, numerous broken pieces of stone and bone awls, and five flint drills.” It is not possible to match Tower’s spare descriptions of these artifacts to any objects available for direct observation or available in photographs.

#### ***Find No. 9***

Tower considered Find No. 9 as the strangest of his 12 “grouped finds.” Its artifacts were not mortuary associated. They included a flat steatite dish covering an “odd shaped steatite boat bowl.” Each end of the boat bowl had been drilled, the holes possibly for suspending the receptacle over a fire, according to Tower. Limited description of this “odd” artifact coupled with an absence of any other record of the piece precludes labeling it a canoe effigy/charm. Neither the said dish nor a “short stubby roller pestle” that sat nearby can be matched to collection specimens or to artifacts displayed in Tower’s photographs taken over seven decades ago. The boat bowl held a finely made spear point and a figurine of dark steatite, 2 in long, with a head of “Mexican design.”

In the vicinity, about 10 ft away from the aforesaid artifacts, was another bowl, tiny and of granite, and a flat pestle. Half of a black steatite donut stone was also nearby.

No object noted in Tower’s written record of Find No. 9 can be positively matched to any artifact pictured in the relic collector’s photographs or any artifacts presently available for direct observation.

#### ***Find No. 10***

“Near” the location of the No. 9 “grouped find,” Tower unearthed a woman’s burial. Clustered about the disintegrated cranium were 23 keyhole limpet shell beads, which Tower supposed had been woven into the deceased’s hair. One might wonder whether the sex determination followed from Tower’s supposition

that the limpet ornaments adorned the head rather than the neck. No other artifacts were noted.

#### ***Find No. 11***

Find No. 11 was a highly decomposed skeleton, lying prone. To one side of the remains lay a stack of four large abalone shells. No artifacts were contained in the uppermost shell, but just beneath, a shell held four “bone gouges,” all segments of pelican wing bones, each about 5 in long. Tower reported his past experiences involving pieces of broken wing bones, specifically their associations within the “beds” of burned turban snails. The two bottom *Haliotis* shells contained roasted turban shells, evidence, he claimed, that supported his hypothesis that bird bone “gouges” were employed to pick meat out of the shells. No other objects appeared with or near the skeleton. Interestingly, Paul Schumacher supposed that hollow bones of large birds were sharpened at one end to be used as marrow extractors (Abbott and Putnam 1879:230).

#### **Additional Tower I Artifacts Not Assignable to “Grouped Finds”**

##### ***Introduction***

The artifacts described and discussed below are separated into four categories. The first category consists of LAN-138 ornaments and possible ornaments. Limited information precludes knowing whether any of these artifacts came from a “grouped find,” but we suspect some may have been among the contents of Find No. 3, or the “Sunken Dwelling of the Chumash” (see Hunter and Koerper 2014; Koerper and Cramer 2014). Four receptacles make up the second category of objects of indeterminate provenience. Then there are six ground stone tools with bifacially beveled bits, their working edges ranging from chisel-like to chopper-like, for which associations are not known. Lastly, there is a plummet-like magico-religious object

that cannot be identified among Tower's listings of "grouped finds."

*Ornaments and Possible Ornaments*

Insufficient information precludes assignment of provenience to all ornaments and possible ornaments shown in Figure 5–8. Other uncertainties follow from

the unavailability of those 22 LAN-138 specimens for direct observation by the authors, who instead worked off of several color photographs and measurements supplied by Thomas Tower III.

Among these Malaga Cove stone ornaments that remain in the custody of Tower's grandson, there are three steatite objects (Figures 5c, e, f) that most likely



Figure 5. Malaga Cove site stone ornaments. (a) lip libret or ear spool; (b,d) possible ear spools; (c,e,f) probable ear spools. Photographs by Thomas Tower III.

were inserted into ear lobes. Asphaltum was applied to at least one side of the smallest spool (Figure 5c), suggesting that something decorative had been affixed to it. Red colorant (ochre) appears to have coated at least one of the faces of the largest spool (Figure 5f). Speculatively, these adornments may have been the referents when Tower mentioned “earbobs.” Unfortunately, “earbob” does not occur among listings for his “grouped finds.”

The grayish steatite ornament seen in Figure 5a may have been either a lip labret or another ear spool. Lip labrets were typically inserted just to one side of the lower lip. The face shown is somewhat scored and gives evidence of asphaltum, again a hint that decorative elements, such as beads or colorful feathers, had perhaps been glued onto that surface.

The holed artifacts of Figures 5b and 5d show encircling grooves, attributes that suggest use as earlobe spools/plugs. The smaller appears to have been fashioned of good quality dark soapstone. The larger was possibly shaped from a sedimentary stone; small amounts of ochre and tarry mastic cling to some surfaces.

With the exceptions of the unusual (steatite?) object of Figure 6l and the elongated (steatite?) specimen of Figure 6j, both probably pendants, the remaining specimens in Figure 6 are beads. At least four (Figures 6a, c, d, f) appear to be of steatite; the two with some red ochre coating (Figures 6e, k) appear to be of somewhat grainy sedimentary stone. Presently, the specimens of Figures 6b and 6g are not identified as to lithic material. The final two (Figures 6h, i) were shaped out of abalone shell. Asphaltum splotches cling to one side of the Figure 6h specimen.

Tower (1942) noted five abalone shell “buttons,” their diameters ranging from 1 in to 3 in, associated with Find No. 3; no other “grouped find” was reported as having even a single “button.” Tower’s use of the term

“button” was probably intended to reflect shape rather than function.

The objects of Figures 6h and 6i were possibly two of the Find No. 3 “buttons,” as were the two larger abalone disk-shaped artifacts seen in Figure 7. The several holed abalone disks noted here were likely displayed on the person, but decoration for such things as baskets cannot be ruled out.

The holed sedimentary stone disks shown in Figures 8a and 8b, the larger of siltstone and the smaller possibly of shale, are less likely to have had ornamental purpose than a practical function. In coastal southern California such perforated stone disks appear generally of low quality material and quick workmanship, without aesthetic appeal (see Koerper and Drover 1983:24–25). Regionally, they are often labeled “spindle whorls” (e.g., Jones 1956:233; Ross 1970:52–53), yet J. P. Harrington’s (1942:25) Salinan, Chumash, Kitanemuk, Fernandeano, and Gabrielino informants denied that they had any such tools for making cordage. Such objects are too lightweight if fixed to a shaft to provide sufficient momentum to impart uniform rotational speed.

Not particularly attractive as adornments, not useful as flywheels, and less than ideal for toy buzzes (see Koerper 1998:260–265), they are, however, perfect as an accouterment of game strings. Strung onto a game string, a disk provides a surface against which a string can be hitched about itself and drawn taut, precluding the need to knot the string to hold fast a hunter’s quarry (e.g., rabbit, squirrel). Koerper (1998:265) was considering ceramic disks shaped from large pot sherds, not unlike the stone disks noted here, when he observed that because the disks can move freely along the string, quick adjustments are possible to accommodate the addition of subsequently dispatched prey. Consider that knots can present “knotty” problems requiring the application of fingernails or a fid-like device such as an awl to untie a knot.





Figure 6. Ornaments found by Thomas Tower I at the Malaga Cove site. (a–g, k–j) stone; (h, i) abalone shell. Photographs by Thomas Tower III.

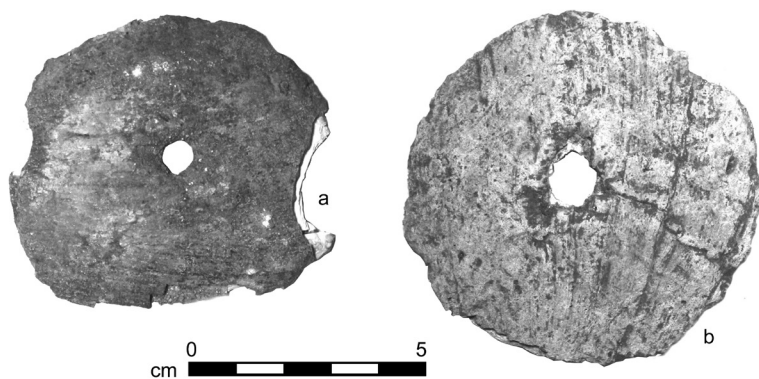


Figure 7. Holed, disk-shaped abalone objects; decorative function most probable. Malaga Cove site. Photographs by Thomas Tower III.

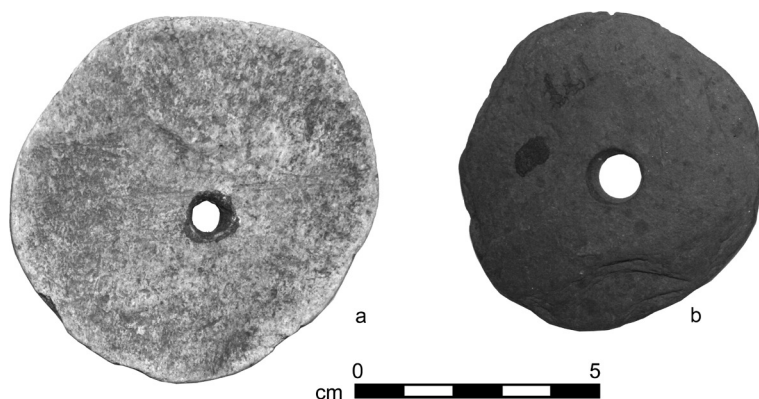


Figure 8. Holed, sedimentary stone disks from CA-LAN-138; (a) siltstone; (b) shale. More likely practical rather than ornamental. Photographs by Thomas Tower III.

## *Bowls*

### **Introduction**

One sandstone and four steatite bowls unearthed by Thomas Tower III at LAN-138 are presently on display at the PVCIC. Specimen TT#4 is discussed above in the section that deals with Find No. 5 (“Chumash Infant Burial”). It was sometime in the 1990s, possibly on the occasion of a visit by Dr. William Wallace to the Rancho Palos Verdes facility, that “TT” (for Thomas Tower) catalog numbers were assigned to the bowls as well as to other kinds of artifacts.

### **Specimen TT#3**

Dark, good quality steatite (not quite serpentine) is the material of the largest bowl (Figures 9 and

10), which is oval shaped with a rounded bottom. Weighing 2,741 g, its length is 227 mm, while width measures about 185 mm. The receptacle height is 119 mm, and it is about 72 mm from its rim to the very bottom of its basin. It exhibits imperfect symmetry, the surfaces crafted unevenly. It was finished to a low level of polish and shows scratches and dings from handling.

A groove of variable width and depth undulates around the bowl’s circumference just beneath the rim. Five sets of paired, parallel incisions sit variably spaced atop the rim, whose maximum width is 19 mm. There are minor splotches of red pigment on the walls. The outside bottom appears particularly compromised when contrasted with the smoothed, inner walls of the basin. This artifact possibly had a ceremonial function.



Figure 9. Specimen TT#3, steatite bowl. Side view.



Figure 10. Specimen TT#3. Top view.

### Specimen TT#5

The most interesting, if not the most aesthetically pleasing, of the receptacles under discussion is the oval piece seen in Figures 11 and 12. Its symmetry and smooth finish are testimony to crafting by an accomplished artisan. Indeed, its underside received nearly as much care in shaping as its more visible upper surfaces.

The 285 g artifact is 127 mm long, 77 mm wide, and about 30 mm in height. Its cavity is only 15 mm deep, shallow enough that it might reasonably be referred to

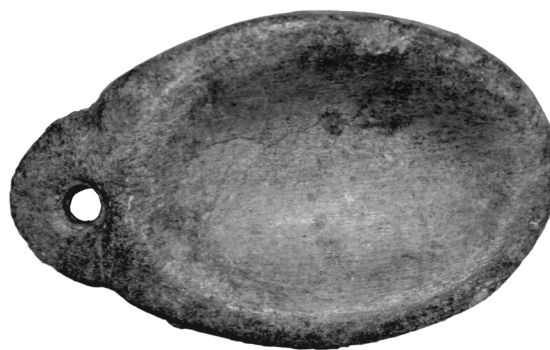


Figure 11. Specimen TT#5, steatite, possible ochre processing bowl/dish. CA-LAN-138.



Figure 12. Specimen TT#5. Bottom side.

as a dish. The biconically drilled hole is about 13 mm, maximum diameter. Red ochre remaining in its basin indicates possible use in pigment preparation. The rounded flange with its biconically drilled perforation suggests that a stick was inserted into the hole in order to lift the container in and out of a heat source, perhaps to facilitate melding together pigment mineral and binder (animal fat?).

Interestingly, Tower mentioned this artifact in a postscript to correspondence mailed to Edwin Walker (T. Tower to E. Walker, letter, 20 May 1941, Walker Notebook Vol. 1, Braun Research Library, Autry

National Center, Los Angeles). The artifact appears in a photograph taken by Tower of part of his collection; see Koerper and Peterson's (2014:55) Figure 8, where it can be seen standing at the rear of the lower step, seventh object from the right.

#### Specimen TT#6

Specimen TT#6 was carved from good quality, dark gray steatite into a form projecting compromised symmetry, evident when viewed from any side, from the top, or from the bottom (Figure 13). All surfaces are rough and made all the less pleasing by applications of asphaltum. Perhaps it functioned as a tar melting pot. The piece weighs 1,432 g. Maximum length and width are 149 mm and 128 mm. Maximum height is about 72 mm. Depth of the container measures ca. 58 mm.

#### Specimen TT#7

The 1,864 g bowl made of consolidated sandstone (Specimen TT#7) (Figure 14) exhibits pleasing symmetry. Its maximum diameter is 139 mm, and height measures 86 mm. Its basin is about 57 mm deep. Asphaltum is absent from all surfaces. The piece appears in a photograph taken by Thomas Tower (see Koerper and Peterson 2014:Figure 5, bottom row, second from left).



Figure 13. Specimen TT#6. Steatite bowl.

PCAS Quarterly 52(1)

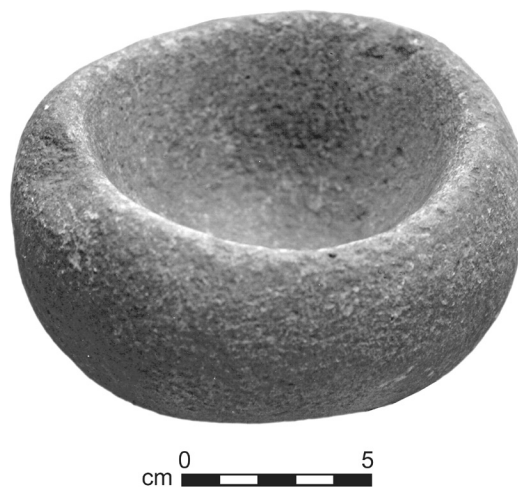


Figure 14. Specimen TT#7. Sandstone bowl.

### *Ground Stone Tools with Bifacially Beveled Bits*

#### Introduction

LAN-138 ground stone artifacts possessing a bifacially beveled bit are discussed below. The group undoubtedly represents more than a single functional category.

In Tower's (1942) manuscript in the section on stratigraphy, passing mention is given to "very crude stone tranchets." Two "crude stone tranchets" (no further description offered) were among the many artifacts associated with Find No. 4. (see below). Provenience cannot be assigned for any artifact with bifacially beveled bit or bit-like business ends.

#### Specimen TT#8

Specimen TT#8 (Figures 15–18) was crafted from an 875 g waterworn rock. Length is 195 mm, and maximum width measures 105 mm. Maximum thickness is 13.5 mm. Its material may be basalt.

Carefully crafted notches are positioned opposite one another about midway down the artifact. The notching took shape first by percussion flaking, followed



Figure 15. Specimen TT#8. Axe head or large chisel.

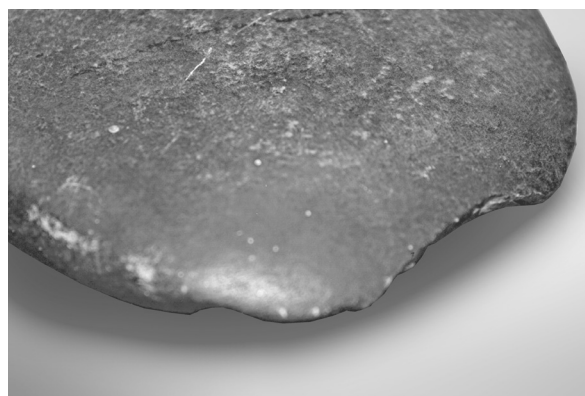


Figure 18. Distal end of Specimen TT#8, showing some polish.

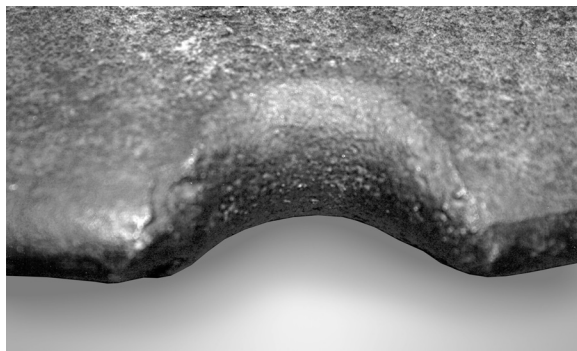


Figure 16. One of two side-notches on Specimen TT#8.

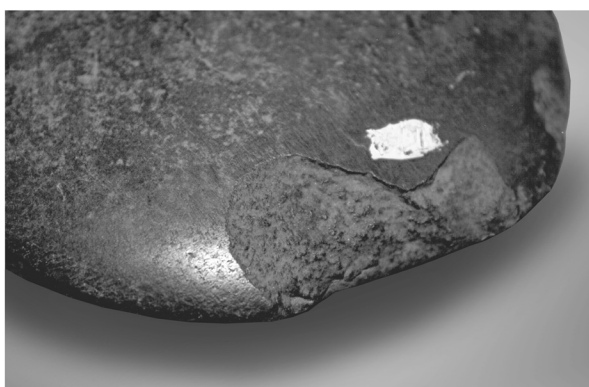


Figure 18. Distal end of Specimen TT#8, showing some polish.

by smoothing the flake scars using an angular hammerstone (Figure 15). There are no grooves running notch-to-notch on either face, which may reflect that this axe-like or chisel-like tool was not hafted onto a wooden handle. Rather, we suppose that it was held with the thumb and either the index or middle finger firmly in opposition.

Evidence of use is apparent at the distal end where, for instance, large flakes had disengaged from one face (Figure 17). Along the bifacially beveled chopping edge, there is some amount of smoothing of surfaces, some with a polished look (Figure 18) as might be expected from employment against wood. Specimen TT#8 appears in a Tower photograph reproduced in Koerper et al. (2014:27, Figure 7, at bottom of display, second from left).

**Specimen TT#10**

Given its exquisite symmetry, from its smoothly flattish proximal end to its bifacially beveled bit, the woodworking tool pictured in Figures 19 and 20, Specimen TT#10, projects the ideal plan for what is a celt/adze head, chisel, or wedge. The material, a dark greenish, moderately granular stone, palpably adds to the artifact's eye appeal.

The piece is 89 mm long. Close to the border of the proximal end, it is nearly 34 mm wide, while at the cutting or splitting end, maximum width is 42 mm. Maximum thickness is 19 mm. Use wear is evident from small missing chips and polish along the curved terminus.

The artifact in all aspects compares extremely well to specimens known from the Northwest Coast culture area (e.g., Stewart 1973:46–50). In this paper's final section we broach the subject of cultural influence, more likely indirect than direct, from the Pacific Northwest that is seen at Malaga Cove.

### Specimen TT#11

Artifact TT#11 is a 141 g, dark gray slate, blade-like implement (Figures 21–23). A biconically drilled hole occupies the proximal end. The distal end shows a bifacially beveled edge of pleasing symmetry, whose use wear is manifested as a polish (Figure 23), suggesting employment against a soft medium such as animal hide or highly micaceous soapstone. Deep scratches occupy all surfaces of both faces, perhaps from manufacture of the specimen.

Length measures 137 mm, and maximum width is 75 mm. Maximum thickness is about 1 mm. Hole diameters are 13 mm at one side and 12 mm at the other. There is no mastic evident to indicate the artifact was once hafted. The tool fits comfortable in the hand when positioned as if to do work, suggesting it was hand-held for an artisan's labors. TT#11 does not appear in any Tower photo of which we are aware.

### Specimen TT#12

Specimen TT#12 is a 426 g, dark gray slate tool displaying heavy use wear (chipping) along its distal irregularly curved end (Figures 24 and 25). One might suspect employments involving wood. Its surfaces are rough textured, one face more so than its opposite,

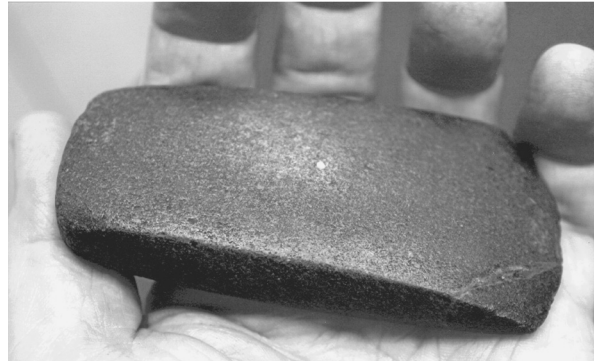


Figure 19. Specimen TT#10. A celt/adze head, chisel, and/ or wedge.



Figure 20. View of Specimen TT#10 showing use wear at distal end.

imparting the least amount of eye appeal among the tools characterized herein as possessing a bifacially beveled bit.

It is 179 mm long, and maximum width is 120 mm. Maximum thickness measures 15 mm. This artifact appears in a decades-old photograph of a display case being held by Thomas Tower (Koerper et al. 2014:25, Figure 4, at upper left).

### Specimen TT#19

Specimen TT#19 (Figures 26–28) is a basalt axe head or adze head weighing 732 g. It is 131 mm long, with maximum width and maximum thickness measuring

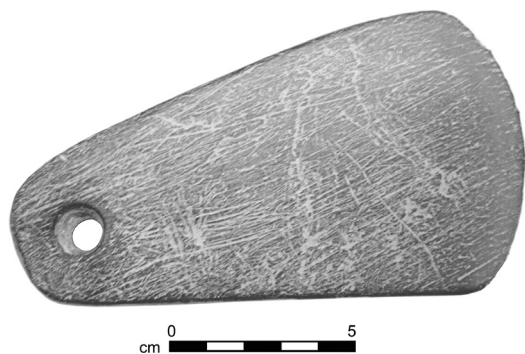


Figure 21. Plan view of Specimen TT#11. Slate implement whose bifacially beveled bit was probably employed against a soft medium.



Figure 24. Specimen TT#12, a slate tool with a bifacially beveled bit.



Figure 22. Lateral view of Specimen TT#11 showing its relative thinness.



Figure 25. Bit end of Specimen TT#12, showing heavy use wear.

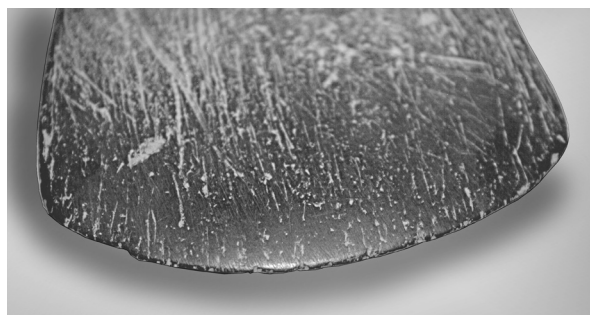


Figure 23. Distal end of Specimen TT#11, showing use wear and polish.

The artifact's surfaces are roughly textured with the exception of its bifacially beveled distal end (Figure 27), where at each side, just back of the symmetrical bit, the stone has been ground smooth. Use wear is evident from some very small chips that had disengaged from the working edge (Figure 28), perhaps the result of chopping or trimming wood or even working steatite. The artifact is not seen in any Tower photograph of which we are aware.

**Specimen TT#13**

We briefly revisit Specimen TT#13 (Figures 29 and 30) which was published in Koerper et al. (2014:31–32, Figure 12), where it was proposed that the 70 g,

87 mm and 46 mm, respectively. The unevenly crafted, circumferential groove probably facilitated hafting onto a wooden handle. Width across the groove on each face is about 78 mm.



Figure 26. Specimen TT#19. Basalt axe or adze head, grooved for hafting. Length is 131 mm.

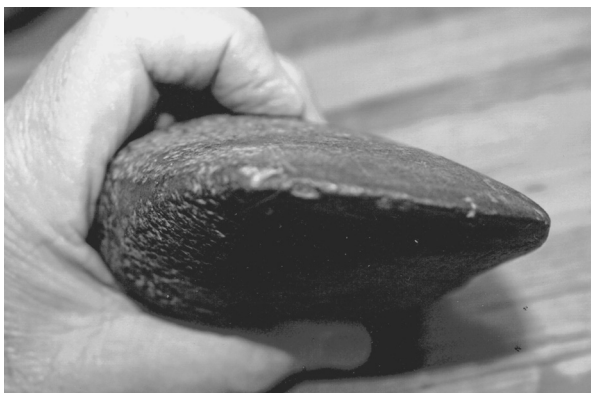


Figure 27. Specimen TT#19. Bit area is smooth on both faces.

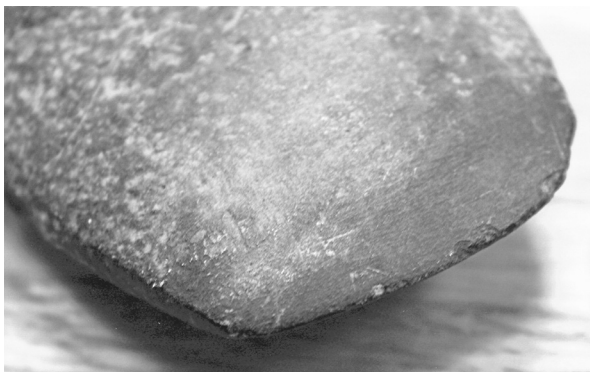


Figure 28. Specimen TT#19. Use wear is evident from modest chipping scars.



Figure 29. Specimen TT#13. Consolidated sandstone artifact of uncertain function. Length is 126 mm, and maximum width is 52 mm.



Figure 30. Specimen TT#13, showing bifacially beveled end, which displays no obvious use wear.

126 mm long, 52 mm wide, and 9 mm thick artifact was perhaps a dorsal fin effigy. The artifact's material was labeled "granular slate," but now, with the counsel of Joe Cocke (2015 personal communication) we report it more likely to be a dense, consolidated sandstone.

The effigy hypothesis is not abandoned, but another hypothesis might be proposed, to wit, TT#13 was a tool, designed perhaps for processing soft material, as its larger end is bifacially beveled (Figure 30). However, if the curved larger end was a bit, it lacks both sharpness and any obvious use wear. There is no evidence to indicate that it was ever hafted; yet, if it was put to any practical purpose, it may have been hand-held.



### *A Plummet-like Charmstone*

The object seen in Figure 31, Specimen TT#17, weighs 143 g and is 88 mm long. Maximum diameter measures nearly 41 mm.

Its morphology projects a pleasing symmetry. All surfaces are attractively smooth, partly the consequence of its being made of easily worked Altamira shale, which is a compact, not particularly granular, stone. Both ends come to nearly identically shaped, very pointed terminations. Cross sections taken at right angles anywhere along the artifact's long axis closely approximate circles. Since the cross sections are not at all lenticular, this football-shaped object could never be confused with a type known as the "lozenge stone" (see Sutton and Koerper 2009:12–16; Koerper and Desautels-Wiley 2010).

If this specimen actually belongs to the range of charmstones characterized as non-perforated elongates, then it might be broadly dated to within the Middle Holocene period (Koerper 2012:102). Sutton and Gardner (2010:8, Table 1) identify the charmstone as a marker trait for the Topanga II phase of the Topanga Pattern of the Encinitas Tradition. Its close approximation to the shape of an American football is a form we had not previously encountered; its unique design coupled with the fact that the great majority of

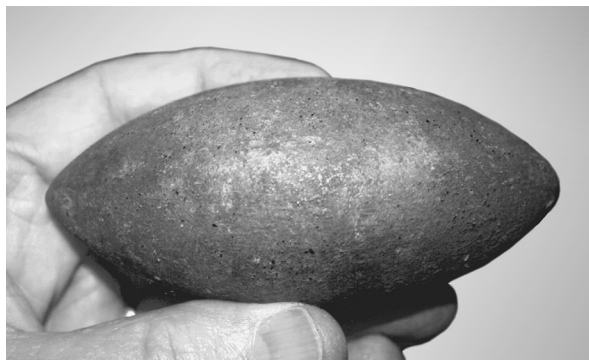


Figure 31. Specimen TT#17. Altamira shale, football-shaped charmstone. Length is 88 mm.

Malaga Cove finds postdate the Topanga Pattern raises the possibility that Specimen TT#17 signals a previously unrecognized genre of ritual object.

Thomas Tower's (1942) manuscript does not record where he found the charmstone. It is seen in one of his photographs of Malaga Cove discoveries (Koerper and Peterson 2014:52, Figure 5, upper shelf, third from right).

### **Summary and Concluding Notes and Thoughts**

Continuing inquiries bearing on stratigraphy, chronology, and material culture at the celebrated Malaga Cove site are most recently invested in careful study of the discoveries and documentations relating to Thomas Tower I's activities there over seven decades ago (see Hunter and Koerper 2014; Koerper, Hunter, and Snyder 2014; Koerper and Peterson 2014; Koerper and Cramer 2014; Koerper, Hunter et al. 2014; Koerper, Snyder et al. 2014). The artifact collector's invaluable legacy includes the following: correspondence (1940–1941), one of the several letters containing a Malaga Cove site stratigraphic profile; a manuscript (1942); and photographs showing artifacts, many of which are on loan from the Tower family to the PVIC, Rancho Palos Verdes. Other artifacts remain out-of-state, in the care of grandson Thomas Tower III, who supplied us with photographs and measurements of specimens.

The present article is the final installment of information derived from Thomas Tower's searches at the Malaga Cove site, but it will not be our last consideration of findings at LAN-138. More variability is in the offing because additional collections long sequestered will be brought to light; these collections were generated from both avocational and professional efforts.

This last installment is largely a detailed show-and-tell piece, and because we deem it superfluous to

summarize any foregoing descriptive content, we leave the reader with a quick selection of interesting observations, notes, and thoughts: (1) some of the descriptions extend our knowledge of the range of variability regarding the material manifestations of magico-religious life and aesthetic expression that occurred within the Angeles Pattern of the Del Rey Tradition; (2) the three anthropomorphic figurines associated with Tower's Find No. 2 possibly represent the only formally documented cache of fired clay effigies discovered in the Los Angeles basin; (3) the tiny, dark serpentine cup of Find No. 4 is an excellent candidate for the single best manufacture pointing to the apogee of regional Native stone carving; (4) Tower's observation of the association of wing bones and turban shells in Find No. 11 supports his earlier supposition that certain bird bones had functioned as dining utensils; (5) Specimen TT#10, absent any association with any of Tower's "grouped finds," is very likely a wedge or adze/chisel produced by a Northwest Coast artisan. This raises the question of whether it was actually found at the Malaga Cove site. Before the reader rejects local provenance out-of-hand, be apprised of two equally curious discoveries.

The (vesicular?) basalt artifact seen in Figures 32–34 is unequivocally of Northwest Coast origin (see e.g., Stewart 1973:4, 5, 58–59), and purportedly it was retrieved from the beach at Malaga Cove. It is a T-shaped maul, an implement employed for wood-working, as when its relatively flat, circular head impacts a wedge to split logs or lumber. The tool is missing one of its two bulbous handles. The area that sustained breakage was subsequently smoothed to efface any roughness.

The artifact's head diameter measures 86.4 mm. Width across the "T," when both bulbous handles were intact, is estimated at ca. 44 mm. From the area of breakage to the most lateral point of the extant handle, the measurement is ca. 109 mm. Maximum

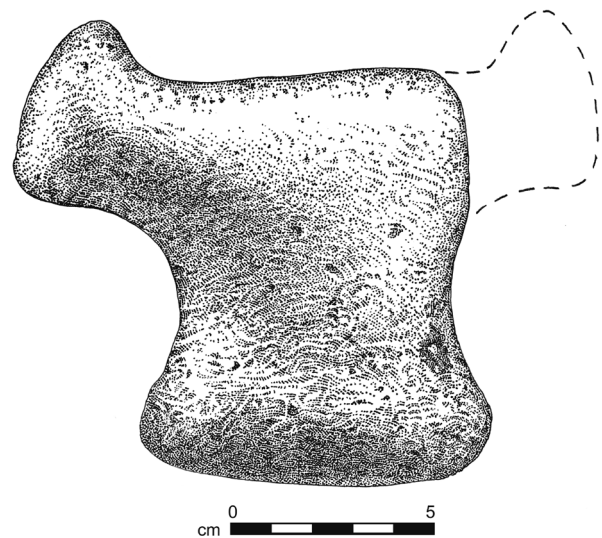


Figure 32. T-shaped maul, Northwest Coast, reportedly found at Malaga Cove. Outline indicates position of missing handle.



Figure 33. View of maul showing striking head..

height is ca. 112 mm. Minimum diameter at the area below the head is 68 mm.

This Northwest Coast maul was once on display at the Malaga Cove School, Palos Verdes Estates, residing in the small museum then managed by the Palos Verdes



Figure 34. View of maul showing handle.

Historical Society (PVHS). A museum label identified the piece as a donation out of the Murray Korda Collection, giving the provenance noted above. This gift was the only Native artifact from that collection.

Many knew Korda as an “amateur archaeologist” (e.g., Murphy 1968:G20), but far more people knew Korda as a violist, an orchestra leader, and an actor (film and television) (Los Angeles Times, 10 October 1998). Korda died in a car accident in Vermont in 1998 at age 70. It is presently unknown whether Korda’s artifact entered the PVHS collection before or after his demise. A very real possibility that the Malaga Cove site had once held two distinctive types of Northwest Coast woodworking stone tools serves up challenging food for thought.

The last curious discovery of a tool with possible Northwest Coast connections was donated to the Southwest Museum in 1946 by Thomas Tower I, who recovered the artifact from Level 2 at Malaga Cove. The “gift index” record card indicates that Mark Harrington identified the object (Cat. No. 1060-G-1) as an “old copper knife blade.” The specimen is said to measure ca. 116 mm in length and ca. 22 mm in

width. The “hand pounded copper” artifact has convex surfaces that slope to both “wavy” edges. The base is straight and shows evidence of hafting at the distal 19 mm of the piece. It is well documented that native copper (a.k.a. “malleable copper” and “virgin copper”) was cold hammered in the Northwest Coast, Western Arctic, and other culture areas (Driver and Massey 1957:345, 346, Map 132; see also Franklin et al. 1981; McCartney 1988; Acheson 2003; Cooper 2007). We wonder whether Russian contact at the historic end of the Del Rey Tradition might account for the presence of the celt, maul, and copper knife at LAN-138.

Long promoted as the type site for coastal southern California prehistory, LAN-138 was deemed by Koerper and Peterson (2014) to have been less than an ideal candidate to assume the mantle of regional historical guidepost. Information published both concurrent with and subsequent to that opinion does nothing to mitigate the proffered downgraded status.

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