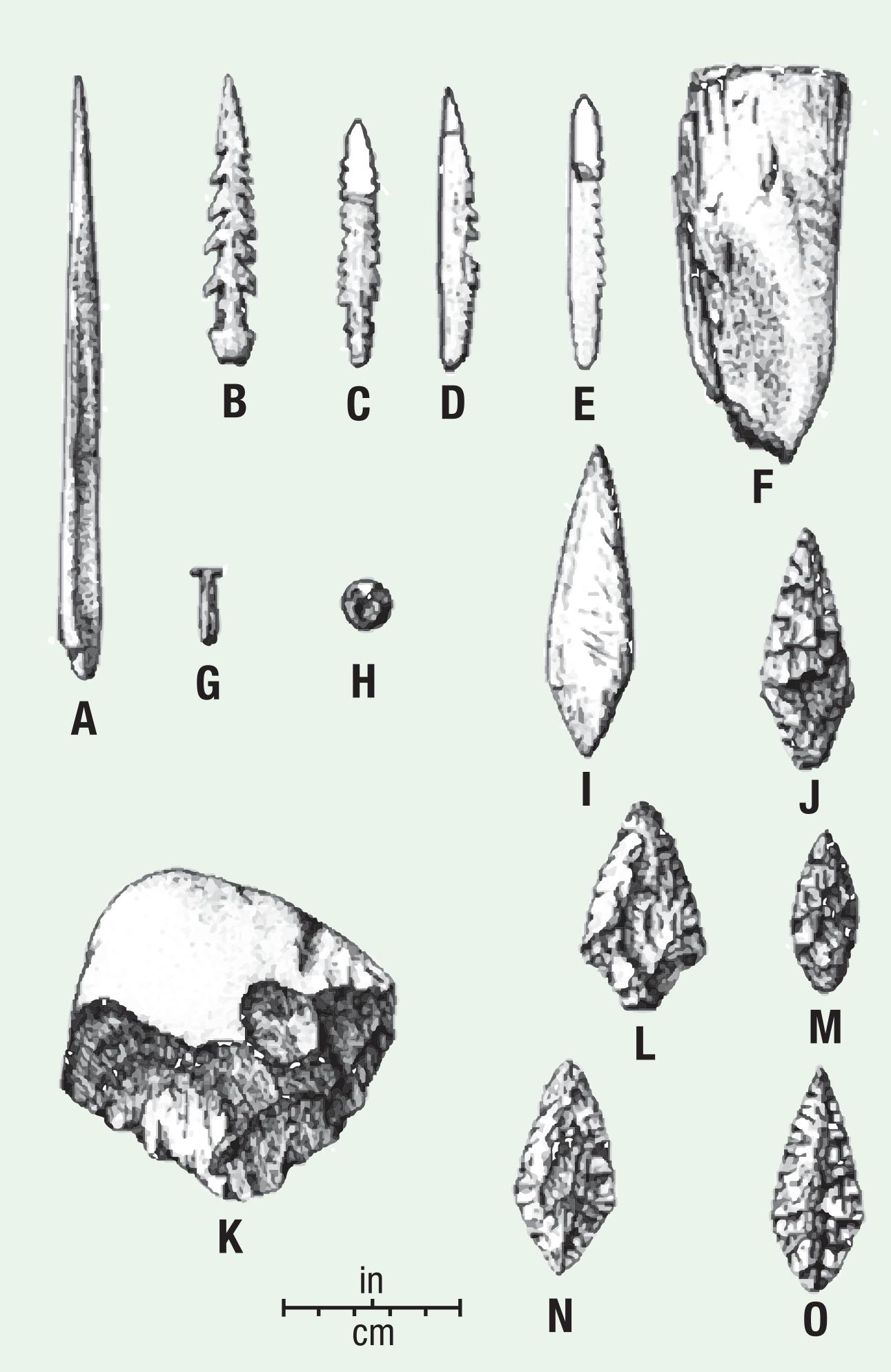
## The Bluffs History

For centuries the Penelakut tribe of the Hul'qumi'num peoples seasonally occupied some of the sheltered bays on the narrow waterway situated just below here, a waterway now known as Active Pass (named after a 19th century American survey ship, the USS Active). In fact, Active Pass has been used by indigenous peoples for thousands of years, as an area to fish and hunt sea mammals, and collect shellfish and other seafoods.

Archeological studies conducted along the shoreline have found artifacts dating back 5000 years. No doubt these same peoples visited and used the forests that dominate this area we now call Bluffs Park.



Mayne phase artifact types from the Helen Point site. A: bone point; B, C: bilaterally barbed harpoons of antler; D, E: unilaterally barbed antler points with lashing grooves; F: antler wedge; G: stone labret; H: stone ornament; I: ground slate point; J, L: stemmed chipped stone points; K: pebble tool; M: leaf-shaped point; N, O: diamond shaped stone points

Illustration from "Excavations at Helen Point on Mayne Island" by Roy L. Carlson, BC Studies 6/7 (Autumn 1970)

After European settlers began to arrive on the island in the late 1800s the Bluffs open area, now commonly known as The Lookout because of its expansive views, became a popular hiking destination and picnicking spot. The idea of preserving the Bluffs lands for public enjoyment took hold and by the 1930s a plan of purchase was being developed in cooperation with the then owner of much of the surrounding property, Max Enke.

However, Mr. Enke, on holiday in Europe in 1939, was interned by the occupying German Forces as an enemy alien, and, as such, was a prisoner there until the end of World War Two. Despite these setbacks, fundraising continued. Paul Scoones, a prominent founding member of The Galiano Club (the island's only social organization at the time), made his popular weekly gramophone concerts into "Bluff Park events", with donations going to the land purchase fund. Thirty-five islanders collectively offered a sizeable amount of money towards the same purchase fund. Returned now to his island home in 1948 and informed of these generous efforts, Max Enke donated the land immediately behind the Bluffs (Section 4) and accepted the monies available as payment for the land below (Section 2). Fred Robson agreed to amend his timber cutting license on the Bluff lands, to not cut in Section 2 and to share revenues from the cutting in Section 4. By year's end, 317 acres (128 ha) had been assembled to create what had already come to be known as Bluffs Park. Title was given to The Galiano Club and discussions began to create an operational contract for the future.

In 1951, the Bluff Park Deed of Trust was registered and gave The Galiano Club the authority for the administration and maintenance of the Park. It was this contract that guided the Park for the next several decades.

By the 1980s, with an increase in both the island's population and the numbers of visitors to the island, there was increased use of the Park. Also changing were ideas on how to best preserve forest land. In 1988, The Galiano Club, after much discussion and debate, decided to register the Bluff Park Lands, under the *BC Parks Act*, as a Nature Conservancy Area with the Club as Trustee. It is this agreement that governs the Park to this day.

## The Bluffs Ecosystem

One hundred metres above Active Pass, the 65 million year old layered sedimentary bedrock under your feet has been folded, uplifted, glacially-eroded, and weathered to form the foundation for the landscape you see today.

Bluffs Park is one of the last remaining examples in the Gulf Islands of an intact, highly diverse mixed forest ecosystem dominated by majestic, old-growth Western Red Cedar, Douglas Fir, Garry Oak, Arbutus, and big-leaf Maple trees. Also growing here are many kinds of lichens, mosses, fungi, ferns, grasses, flowers, and shrubs that are able to make a living on the thin soils of these rocky cliffs. In turn these communities support a wide variety of insects, spiders, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals, ranging in size from deer mice to black-tail deer. All these life-forms interact in dynamic and complex relationships that sustain the whole ecosystem, and which we only partially understand.

What we do know is that from delicate wildflowers to soaring eagles, from earthy mushrooms to dancing butterflies, this wonderful place is filled with life at all seasons. Let us appreciate its beauty and the lessons it has to teach.







Rene Zich, Galiano Island Mike Hoebel, Galiano Island

Mike Hoebel, Galiano Island

## Help document the biodiversity of the Bluffs Park!

You can help document the great diversity of species that make their home in Bluffs Park.

- 1. Download the iNaturalist app
- 2. Create an account
- 3. Add your nature photos to the Bluffs Park Galiano Checklist project

Find something new and its name will be added to the list!

Remember! This is a sensitive ecosystem area. Step gently as you enjoy the views and the many species of flora and fauna. Absolutely no fires, camping or motorized vehicles. Use the trails at your own risk.

The Galiano Club — a Galiano Island Community
Association since 1924. Email: galianoclub@gmail.com

