

So far, no human or food remains have been recovered. No carbon has so far been encountered.

This is an important site as it is the first open known site ever located in Sarawak where stone tools in abundant quantity had been recovered in association with earthenware. Further fieldwork is planned which it is hoped will yield more exciting finds.

Special attention will be paid to plant remains which have hitherto been neglected at the other sites in Sarawak.

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# PHASEOLOGY OF THE PREHISTORY OF SARAWAK

## with emphasis on West Mouth, Niah

PHASE	MAIN MATERIAL CHARACTERISTICS
Middle Palaeolithic before 40,000 BC	Before 40,000 BC at the depth below 100", the only surviving stone implement so far recovered was a tiny 'chip flake'. No other tools or human and animal remains had been found at this depth. It is believed that any human or other animal remains at this level would have disintegrated. However, further excavation at this depth may reveal other artefacts.
Upper Palaeolithic c.40,000 BC	Fragments of earliest representatives of <i>Homo sapiens</i> , that is true human beings, were recovered in association with 'Sohan flakes' and chopper tools and food remains at the depth of above 100". The food remains consist of several species of animals like Orang Utang and the Great Anteater which had long become extinct in that part of Sarawak. Cave-men ate a lot of both marine and freshwater shells. During this time, cave-men already knew the use of fire by striking quartz pebbles on resin.

c. 30,000 BC	This phase is characterised by quartz flakes. Flakes are not polished tools. They were simply struck from larger stone (core).
Mesolithic c. 10,000 BC	At about 10,000 BC, cave-men began to produce advanced flakes and edge-ground pebble tools which had sharp edges for cutting. Cave-men already began to bury their dead.
Early Neolithic c. 4000 BC	At 4000 BC, cave-men began to produce refined stone tools known as round axes which were highly polished, and produced plain pottery which were used as utensils as well as for ritual burial.
Late Neolithic c. 2500 BC	By 2500 BC, cave-men produced better tools known as quadrangular adzes, which were proportionately cut and polished. Cave-men during this period produced decorative pottery and practised a rather complicated funeral ritual, first by burying their dead and later transferring the bones of the dead into large urns (jars). By this time cave-men would have ventured and built dwellings in the open forest and hunted big game with spears and clubs.
Chalcolithic c. 250 BC	This phase is characterised by tools made of soft stone, elaborate pottery and imported bronze objects.
Metal 700 AD	By 700 AD, Chinese traders already established trading links with the people in Borneo. The Chinese introduced iron tools, ceramics,

glass beads etc. and these were barter trade with local products such as rhinoceros horn, birdsnests, camphor etc. This trading activity with China went on until the Ming Dynasty in the 15th century AD.

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## SARAWAK MUSEUM

### Functions

The Sarawak Museum was established in 1891. It is a state department under the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, and is entirely financed by the State Government of Sarawak with an annual estimated budget of \$462,418 and a staff of 43 (based on 1976 Approved Estimates).

The Sarawak Museum is charged with the administration of the following Ordinances and Regulations:

- i) The Antiquities Ordinance, 1954;
- ii) The Sarawak Museum (Deposit Library) Ordinance, 1961;
- iii) The Preservation of Books Act, 1966; Malaysia, Act of Parliament, No.35 of 1966;
- iv) The Local Newspapers Chapter 139, The Laws of Sarawak, 1958;
- v) The Miscellaneous Licence (Edible Birdsnest) Regulations, 1963;
- vi) The Turtle Trust Ordinance, 1957;
- vii) The Wild Life Protection Ordinance, 1958.

Under these Ordinances and Regulations, it is the responsibility of the Curator and his staff to search, to acquire, to regulate and to protect antiquities and historical monuments which form part and parcel of our national heritage. As Executive Officer of the Turtles Board, the Curator is responsible to extend protective