

Bone Ipiutak head, 8.1 cm



There is cross-hatching on the top of the head to indicate hair, a single diagonal tattoo line on each cheek, traces of earth in the deep eye sockets and mouth, and a characteristic representation of the teeth and neck (that has an ~2 cm deep conical socket terminating in a hexagonal opening at its bottom surface). For heads with similar features from the portion of the artifacts from the original Point Hope Ipiutak site excavations that were retained by the Danish National Museum, see Musée du Quai Branly (2008, and below).

This piece is from one of the Ipiutak sites around the Imuruk Basin. Based on radiocarbon dates (Bowers, 2006) from Ipiutak House 1 (excavated in 1999) and Ipiutak Burial 4 (excavated in 1997 and containing an elaborate burial mask) in the village of Deering (population ~130) on the northern Seward Peninsula, Kotzebue Sound, it can be estimated that other Ipiutak objects from the Seward Peninsula probably also date from about AD 600-900. For a discussion and illustration of other Seward Peninsula Ipiutak finds, see Larsen (1979/80 and 2001).

Literature:

Bowers, P.M. (2006): *Update on the Deering Archaeological Program*, Northern Land Use Research, Inc.

Larsen, H. (1979/80): Examples of Ipiutak Art from Point Spencer, Alaska, *FOLK*, 21-22:17-28.

Larsen, H. (2001): *Deering - A Men's House from Seward Peninsula, Alaska*, Danish National Museum, Copenhagen.

Musée du quai Branly (2008): *Upside Down – Les Arctiques*. Réunion des musées nationaux, Paris.

