

Artifact of the Month

Tribal Historic Preservation Office

December 2016



As you prepare to celebrate the holidays this season, take a moment to consider the preparation of your special feast. Will you prepare a ham? Perhaps a festive Tofurky? All of these delectable delights will likely come from your local grocery store, but what if you had to prepare everything from scratch, and only with tools you could make for yourself!

The object pictured above is a shell adze made from the thick outer shell of a lightning whelk. The shell was cut down to fit the hand, and the natural contours of the whelk were exaggerated to accommodate a comfortable grip. The edge was sharpened, and used to scrape animal hides, work with wood, and other food preparation activities. This adze was found on the Brighton Reservation, and was likely a prized tool that was brought inland all the way from the coast. Though we can't date this specific tool, we know that ones like it have been in use for hundreds of years! What kinds of activities might you find an adze useful for?

Remember to join us in 2017 as we continue our sneak-peek at special artifacts from the collection. From all of us with the THPO Collections staff, have a happy holidays and a prosperous New Year!

