

**CCE AWARD SUBMISSION**

# **CARING FOR THE PAST: BLACKFOOT CROSSING PARK**



At Golder Associates Ltd. (Golder), we are guided by our core values, which were refreshed in a broad-based consultation with our employees around the globe in 2009. One of these values is 'Caring,' which has a strong focus on sustainability, community involvement and social responsibility.

We embrace initiatives that are promoted, initiated and driven by our employees. We encourage our employees to experience the freedom to excel and the passion to make a difference through their community support.

Golder consultants lived up to our core value of Caring during the summer 2014, by bringing together the community, science and our social disciplines. By promoting the success of the University of Calgary (U of C) Public Archaeology Program at Blackfoot Crossing Park, Golder supported research of a significant archaeological site and most remarkably, a proposed United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site application. Our consultants enhanced Golder's financial support for this program initiated by the U of C, Faculty of Arts, contributing their know-how and personal time. The result was a unique opportunity to engage the public with First Nations culture and history through the U of C's archaeology research program (See Photo 1 for core members of the U of C and Golder team).

*"Golder was pleased to work with the University of Calgary as the main supporter of the Public Archaeology Program," said Sean Webster (Ph.D., Archaeology) Principal and Officer Manager at Golder Associates in Calgary. "Our support assisted archaeology students in gaining field experience. We are also proud that as a company we can help encourage collaboration between the Siksika Nation and the public by opening the door to this unique archaeological excavation site."*

Within Golder, we believe that Canadians are interested in their past and want to learn more about it. By giving Albertans the opportunity to help with an archaeology dig at this exceptional First Nation site, we are facilitating historical and cultural awareness among the broader public.



Photo 1: Dale Walde (Associate Professor, Archaeology Department, U of C), Brent Murphy (Associate, Senior Archaeologist, Golder), Mitchell Goodjohn (Associate, Aboriginal Affairs and Traditional Studies, Golder), Richard Sigurdson (Dean, Faculty of Arts, U of C), Gerry Oetelaar, Professor Department of Anthropology & Archaeology, Sarah House (Associate, Environmental and Cultural Sciences Division Manager, Golder), Carol Stefan (Principal, Senior Biodiversity Specialist, Golder), Shawn Morton (U of C Ph.D. candidate), Louise Menard (Principal, Strategy 2020, Golder), Margie Patton (U of C Ph.D. student), Gregory Jones (Associate, Project Manager, Golder).

## BLACKFOOT (SIKSIKA) NATION FIELD SCHOOL PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM SUMMARY

From July 10 to August 14, 2014, members of the public had the opportunity to participate in an archaeological dig at the Blackfoot Nation site near Cluny, AB (Figure 1). By supporting the Public Archaeology Program, Golder created an exceptional opportunity for Albertans and members of the Siksika Nation to work alongside U of C students, make important Canadian archaeological discoveries, and learn about Alberta's First Nations heritage. Volunteers didn't need previous archaeological experience to join the program; they only had to be willing to participate in this fascinating activity!



Photo 2: Shawn Morton, a U of C Ph.D. candidate in Archaeology, explaining the site characteristics and some history about the Blackfoot Nation.

Golder's approach went beyond the minimum expected requirements for supporting the program. We involved our archaeology consultants as volunteers, led discussions at the site to educate the public about the archaeological process, offered professional advice for the conservation of the site, coached students and the public participating in the dig, and promoted the archaeological program within our organization and with clients through a newsletter. Golder's involvement in the U of C's Public Archaeology Program achieved the goal of connecting the public, First Nations members, and archaeology students through investigation of this most remarkable First Nations historical site.



Photo 3: Volunteers with U of C students working on the Cluny site.

*"For me, the most rewarding part of the public program was the perspective that it offered. While we were teaching the public about archaeology, discussing the past from a very particular secular western scientific standpoint, our participants were reminding us that there are multiple ways of knowing about the past. As each participant came at the dig from a different perspective, with different experience, different training, different beliefs, and at different points in their lives, especially in their questions, they each brought complexity to the emerging picture of the past that we were painting."* Shawn Morton, a U of C Ph.D. candidate in Archaeology, is one of the Public Archaeology Program Coordinators who delivered the program during the summer of 2014 (Photo 2).

*"Golder's support of the public archaeology program has been vital in helping us meet our commitment to involving the community in our exploration of our shared heritage and to lifelong learning," said Dale Walde, Associate Professor, Archaeology Department, University of Calgary. "Their support has gone well beyond the financial with the enthusiastic participation of their staff in the work and in promoting the value of archaeology to industry and the general public."*

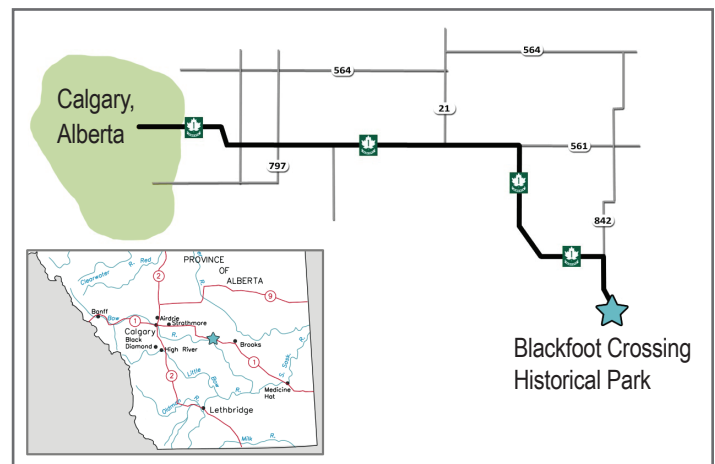


Figure 1: Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park and the dig site are located in the Canadian Badlands Region, about an hour's drive east of Calgary

*"The Public Archaeology Program is a great opportunity for people with an interest in archaeology to experience and participate in research first hand. Many of the participants expressed excitement upon receiving their registration confirmation, and during the program spoke of a lifelong interest in archaeology which they were never able to pursue until now. In many cases, the program was the first time participants were able to experience real archaeology. There is a definite interest in the past and how we can learn things from archaeological excavations. The "dream of being an archaeologist" expressed by many of our volunteers was fulfilled in part by their participation in the program." Margie Patton, a U of C Ph.D. student, is one of the Public Archaeology Program Coordinators who delivered the program during the summer of 2014.*

## SITE BACKGROUND

The Cluny Fortified Village is one of Alberta's more significant archaeological sites. It is a rare example of prehistoric migration and contact between First Nations cultures on the Canadian Plains. The site lies next to the Bow River and is about 300 years old. It is an enigma to archaeologists, who believe it may have been home to a group descended from normally sedentary people from North Dakota. The site has captured the interest of academics and the general public for over 100 years.

"The Cluny Fortified Village Site is unique in the Canadian Plains, with the appearance of a fortified village similar to those constructed by horticultural people of the Middle Missouri region in North Dakota. However, no evidence of corn cultivation has been found at the site and the fortifications at Cluny exhibit strong differences from fortified Middle Missouri villages (Forbis 1977; Walde et al. 2011). At Cluny, people constructed pits, trenches, and a palisade apparently to serve as defensive structures. However, non-defensive activities such as food preparation and the production of beads, pottery, and clothing also took place at the site (Walde 2010)," (Public Archaeology Program, Cluny Fortified Village Site at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park, University of Calgary). Archaeological excavations provide a chance to study occupation of the location and to define the many exceptional site characteristics, creating a better understanding of the nation that existed there.



Photo 4: Barb Kuester's granddaughter Katie, 13 years old, uncovering artifacts.

*"What a fascinating opportunity this was for my granddaughter and me to experience the uncovering of history under the enthusiastic guidance and expert direction of the U of C students. We learned a lot and had fun getting our hands dirty. The icing on the cake was actually making discoveries of the artifacts. What a thrill!"* Barb Kuester, Associate, National Communications Leader.



Photo 5: Barb and Katie measuring their unit.

## BEING AN ARCHAEOLOGIST FOR A DAY

Participants were able to excavate alongside members of the U of C Archaeology Field School at the Cluny Fortified Village site. The Public Program provided on-site training in archaeological excavation techniques. All artifacts from the site became the property of the Siksika Nation and, ultimately, will be stored and displayed at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park Interpretive Centre. The experience was limited to a maximum of six volunteers per day due to equipment and space constraints.

Volunteers who wanted to participate paid the daily admission fee to Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park. Before heading to the site, they checked in with the dig staff at the Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park parking lot at 9 AM. All archaeological excavation equipment was provided to the participants, and all volunteers were required to participate in a daily on-site safety briefing. Work usually finished between 3:30 and 4:00 PM, when volunteers returned to the Interpretive Centre.

Volunteers were invited to participate in all archaeological excavation activity including digging, screening, recording artifacts, note taking, unit mapping, and drawing excavation profiles (Photo 3). They were cautioned that archaeological excavations required physical activity that included kneeling, bending, lifting, screening soil, walking, and carrying heavy objects.

## FINDINGS BY THE PUBLIC

Working within the Cluny site, the volunteer archaeologists (Photo 4, Photo 5) found bone and other food residue suggesting residents ate bison, dog and other small and large mammals. They also uncovered evidence of manufactured decorative items with the recovery of complete and unfinished shell and bone beads, as well as a spatulate tool that could have been used to flatten porcupine quills prior to their incorporation into clothing decoration (Photo 6). Some of the ceramic fragments found in the volunteer units appear to be the result of unsuccessful firing of one or more clay vessels, suggesting that pottery was being made at the site and was not imported from other areas. The work done by the volunteers made a substantial contribution to the season's excavations and will add considerable value to the ongoing research at the site.

Volunteering for a day was certainly a rewarding experience for Albertans, and especially for Barb Kuester, of Golder. Barb, who is not an archaeologist, volunteered with her 13 year-old granddaughter Katie.

## BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAM

One of the main drivers for the success of this program was the active participation from both the Blackfoot (Siksika) Nation and the general public. During the six weeks of excavation, 87 participants contributed a total of 97 person days of excavation to the program. Through Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park, the Siksika Nation enthusiastically supported the work and began the process of encouraging young Nation members to participate in the program while providing a venue for program gatherings at the Interpretive Centre (photo 7). Work will continue during the autumn of 2014 as the program moves forward with laboratory and museum work that will introduce First Nations students and members of the general community to archaeological opportunities in Alberta and throughout Canada.

The economic, social and environmental benefits of this program are significant:

- Building relationships with First Nations people through their potential involvement in archaeological field studies
- Providing invaluable experience for U of C graduate students
- Contributing to Archaeological record of Canada
- Creating opportunities to learn about Alberta's First Nations heritage and culture
- Encouraging collaboration between the general public and the Siksika Nation
- Promoting tourism to the Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park
- Creating more employment opportunities within the Siksika Nation through training in Cultural Resource Management
- Supporting the site designation as a World Heritage Site
- Giving the public direct access to the province's archaeological assets
- Volunteer involvement of Golder professional archaeologists

*"The support of Golder Associates in the creation of the University of Calgary's pilot program for Public Archaeology has made a significant difference to our students, to the public and to members of the Siksika First Nation. By providing necessary resources, as well as active advice and mentorship, Golder has led the way towards greater community engagement, not only in terms of archaeological field experience but in terms of a greater understanding of the Blackfoot past in southern Alberta. Golder's participation made it possible for members of the public literally to get their hands dirty in a real archaeological dig, and learn more about our region's history. At the same time, the support we received allowed us to provide graduate students with unparalleled opportunities to teach and train in their area of study. Partnerships with leaders like Golder are part of the reason why the University of Calgary has increasingly become a national leader in research, teaching and community engagement."* Richard Sigurdson, Ph.D., Dean, Faculty of Arts and Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Calgary.

## BEYOND GOLDER AND THE UNIVERSITY

Due to the high level of media coverage, one of the challenges of this summer was to not be able to accept all volunteers as there were only two summer students coordinating the site and guiding the participants. The Public Excavation program had significant interest by the public and the media. The following links show examples of media and online coverage about the program:

<http://arky.ucalgary.ca/public-archaeology/>

<http://www.blackfootcrossing.ca/>

<http://siksikanation.com/wp/>

<https://www.facebook.com/UCpubarky>

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/calgary/Public+invited+join+excavation+Cluny+Fortified+Village/10050094/story.html>

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/albertans-join-archaeologists-to-help-in-prehistoric-dig-1.2710630>

<http://calgary.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=402935>

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/albertans-join-archaeologists-to-help-in-prehistoric-dig-1.2710630>

## PUBLIC LABORATORY ANALYSIS PROGRAM

Upon completion of the 2014 archaeology field season, the U of C shared the findings of the Public Archaeology Program with Golder's consultants. In addition, the U of C offered a Volunteer Laboratory Analysis Program, which began on October 1st, 2014. During this program, volunteers worked with material from the 2014 excavations. Golder was proud of being able to give the public direct access to artifacts that are usually only accessible in a museum.



Photo 6: Margie Patton, a U of C Ph.D. student, showing some of the discoveries made on site during the summer



Photo 7: Blackfoot Crossing Historical Center

## REFERENCES

<http://www.blackfootcrossing.ca/>

Public Archaeology Program, Cluny Fortified Village Site at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park, University of Calgary, <http://arky.ucalgary.ca/>

Public Invited to Archaeological Expedition at Cluny, Beth McCoy, July 16, 2014, <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/news/public-invited-archaeological-expedition-cluny>

Forbis, Richard G. 1977 Cluny: An Ancient Fortified Village in Alberta. Occasional Paper No. 4. Department of Archaeology, University of Calgary. Calgary.

Walde, Dale 2008 The 2008 Archaeological Field Season at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park. Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park Archaeological Research Project Annual Report #1. Report on file at the Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park Interpretive Centre and at the Department of Archaeology, University of Calgary. Department of Archaeology, University of Calgary. Calgary.

Walde, Dale 2010 Public Archaeology Tour. Department of Archaeology, University of Calgary. Calgary.

Walde, Dale, Lance Evans, Harrison Boss, James Eddy, Lynne Fulton, and Kirrie Ginter 2011 The 2009/2010 Archaeological Field Seasons at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park. Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park Archaeological Research Project Annual Summary Report # 2 and 3. Report on file at the Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park Interpretive Centre and at the Department of Archaeology, University of Calgary. Department of Archaeology, University of Calgary. Calgary.



**Appendices**

### 75 words summary

Golder consultants lived up to a core value - Caring - by bringing together the community, science and our social disciplines. By providing financial and volunteer support for the University of Calgary Public Archaeology Program at Blackfoot Nation Historical Park, Golder aided research of a significant, archaeological site that is under consideration for World Heritage Site status. The result was a unique opportunity to engage the public, First Nations the University of Calgary and archaeology.

## CATEGORY I - COMMUNITY OUTREACH & IN-HOUSE INITIATIVES

### Nature of the Project

Golder consultants lived up to one of our core values - Caring during the summer 2014, by bringing together the community, science and our social disciplines. By promoting the success of the University of Calgary's Faculty of Arts (U of C) Public Archaeology Program at Blackfoot Crossing Park, Golder supported research of a significant archaeological site and most remarkably, a proposed United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site application. Our consultants enhanced Golder's financial support for this program initiated by the U of C, Faculty of Arts, contributing their know-how, professional and personal time. The result was a unique opportunity to engage the public with First Nations culture and history through the U of C's archaeology research program.

Within Golder, we believe that Canadians are interested in their past and want to learn more about it. By supporting this pilot program, we were able to give Albertans the opportunity to help with an archaeology dig at this exceptional First Nation site, and by doing so we are facilitating historical and cultural awareness among the broader public.

The Public Program provided volunteer members of the general public with on-site training in archaeological excavation techniques. The experience was limited to a maximum of six volunteers per day due to equipment and space constraints. The volunteer archaeologists found bone and other food residue suggesting residents ate bison, dog and other small and large mammals. The work done by the volunteers made a substantial contribution to the season's excavations and will add considerable value to the ongoing research at the site. All artifacts from the site became the property of the Siksika Nation and, ultimately, will be stored and displayed at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park Interpretive Centre.

The Public Archaeology Program received impressive media coverage from regional newspapers, television news, and social media (CBC, CTV, Calgary Herald). Due to the favorable media coverage, the program received high interest from members of the public wanting to volunteer for a day or more. Even though participants had to drive an hour to get to the dig site and pay a registration fee, the Public Program was booked to capacity during the summer of 2014.

### Effort and Complexity

From July 10 to August 14, 2014, members of the public had the opportunity to participate in an archaeological dig at the Blackfoot Nation site near Cluny, AB. By supporting the pilot Public Archaeology Program, Golder created an exceptional opportunity for Albertans and members of the Siksika Nation to work alongside U of C students, make important Canadian archaeological discoveries, and learn about Alberta's First Nations heritage. Volunteers didn't need previous archaeological experience to join the program; they only had to be willing to participate in this fascinating activity!

Golder's approach went beyond the minimum expected requirements for supporting the program. We involved our archaeology consultants as volunteers, led discussions at the site to educate the public about the archaeological process, offered professional advice for the conservation of the site, coached students and the public participating in the dig, and promoted the archaeological program within our organization and with clients through a newsletter and social media. Golder's involvement in the U of C's Public Archaeology Program achieved the goal of connecting the public, First Nations members, and archaeology students through investigation of this most remarkable First Nations historical site.

The efforts and complexity of this program started by having to convince Golder's senior's consultants of the benefits of being involved in this program. Once Golder's Cultural Sciences Group had the internal buy-in, Golder technical specialists had to make sure the University of Calgary had knowledgeable undergraduate students who could help educate and lead the volunteers from the general public who had no archaeology experience, on how to effectively participate in the archeological dig. The program was held during very hot summer months. Volunteers were required to work in the hot sun without any coverage, experiencing temperatures of 30-33°C, which made the day exhausting.

### Social, Economic & Other Benefits

One of the main drivers for the success of this program was the active participation of both the Blackfoot (Siksika) Nation and the general public. During the six weeks of excavation, 87 volunteer participants contributed a total of 97 person-days of excavation to the program. Through Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park, the Siksika Nation enthusiastically supported the work and encouraged young Siksika Nation members to participate in the program. Work continued during the autumn of 2014 as the program moved forward with laboratory and museum work that introduced Siksika Nation students and members of the general community to archaeological opportunities in Alberta and throughout Canada. The economic, social and environmental benefits of this program are significant and include:

- Building relationships with First Nations people through their involvement in an active archaeological field study
- Providing invaluable experience for U of C graduate students
- Contributing to the archaeological record of Canada
- Creating opportunities to learn about First Nations heritage and culture
- Encouraging collaboration between the general public and the Siksika Nation
- Promoting tourism to the Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park
- Creating more employment opportunities within the Siksika Nation through training in Cultural Resource Management
- Supporting the site designation as a World Heritage Site
- Giving the public direct access to the province's archaeological assets
- Volunteer involvement of Golder professional archaeologists

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Asia	+ 86 21 6258 5522	North America	+ 1 800 275 3281
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