

Since 2014, the University of Calgary has offered a volunteer excavation program at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park.



The volunteer excavation program is offered in conjunction with Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park. Participants excavate alongside members of the University of Calgary Archaeology Field School at the famous Cluny Fortified Village Site. First time participants receive a tour of the archaeological site. Volunteers are supervised by experienced University of Calgary graduate students, and training in archaeological excavation techniques are provided on site. All artifacts from the site are the property of the Siksika Nation and, ultimately, will be stored at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park Interpretive Centre.



**UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY**

**University of Calgary
Public Archaeology
Program**

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Visit Blackfoot Crossing Historical
Park online:
<http://www.blackfootcrossing.ca>

University of Calgary Public Archaeology Program

May 13—June 12, 2019
Mondays—Fridays



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Photo Credit: Harrison Boss

Cluny Fortified Village

The Cluny Fortified Village Site (EePf-1) is located in the valley of the Bow River in the Siksika First Nation. The Siksika have known about the site since its settlement around 1700 CE, with visits from Euro-Canadians beginning in 1875 CE. The site is unique to the Canadian Plains, with the appearance of a fortified village similar to those constructed by Middle Missouri horticulturalists in North Dakota. However, no evidence of corn cultivation has been found at the site and the fortifications at Cluny exhibit differences from fortified Middle Missouri villages. 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. Based on findings of bone and food residues at Cluny, there is evidence that bison, dog, and small mammals were consumed. Archaeological excavations provide an opportunity to examine the many unique site characteristics that will lead to a better understanding of the people who lived there.

The Program

Participants must commit to a minimum of two days with the program in order to fully experience the dig (these days do **not** have to be consecutive).

Minimum age of participation is 12. Volunteers under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times.

Cost consists of the daily admission fee to Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park (\$12.00+GST for adults, \$8.00 for children).

Check-In and Required Forms

We meet our volunteers at the Blackfoot Crossing Visitor Center parking lot at 9:00 AM each day and drive them down to the site. We return volunteers to the visitor's center at about 3:45 PM.

All participants are required to complete a volunteer registration form, a liability waiver, and a photography waiver. Participants under the age of 18 must also have their parent or guardian complete a consent form. All forms are available on our website. The volunteer registration and liability waiver must be completed on site.



Location

Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park is located in the Canadian Badlands, about an hour's drive east of Calgary. Directions are provided after registration.

What to Expect

Archaeological excavations require physical activity including kneeling, bending, and lifting. Volunteers will participate in all archaeological excavation activities including digging, screening, recording artifacts, note-taking, and unit mapping. Digging equipment is provided and volunteers are trained in archaeological excavation techniques. In case of heavy rain, all work will be cancelled for the day. The program will attempt to notify participants in advance, however this is not always possible.

What to Bring

Participants must bring their own lunch, water, sun screen, bug repellent, hats, work gloves, and must wear weather appropriate clothing. Close-toed shoes are required.

Updates

During the field season, the program updates daily on Facebook. For announcements from the program and up-to-the-minute posts from the dig site, like our page on Facebook!

There is a maximum of 6 volunteers per day due to equipment and space requirements. Contact the Public Archaeology Program to reserve your spot!