

Archaeological Society of Alberta Annual Conference

May 1st, 2021



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

Self-Guided Field Trips Organized By

ASA Edmonton Centre

ASA Red Deer Centre

ASA Bodo Centre

ASA Calgary Centre

ASA Lethbridge Centre

ASA Southeastern Centre



The six centres of the Archaeological Society of Alberta are pleased to offer you self-guided field trips for the afternoon portion of the 2021 ASA Annual Conference, held virtually this year.

In lieu of the traditional field trip organized by the hosting centre, each centre has organized a self-guided walking or driving tour of local archaeological and historical sites for members to visit.

You are invited to participate in the field trip at your own leisure. If you wish to visit field trips provided by the other centres, they are available for downloading on the Archaeological Society of Alberta website (www.arkyalberta.com). Information on the tours provided by all the centres is provided on the next page.

Happy and safe travels!

The Archaeological Society of Alberta would like to acknowledge the Indigenous Peoples of all the lands that we are on today. We would like to take a moment to acknowledge the importance of the lands we share and call home. We do this to reaffirm our commitment and responsibility in improving relationships between nations and improving our own understanding of local Indigenous peoples and their cultures. This is the ancestral and unceded territory of the people of Treaty 4, 6, 7, 8, and 10 as well as the Métis homeland. Their histories, languages, and cultures have enhanced and continue to enrich our province and our organization. We acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past and consider how we can move forward in a spirit of truth, reconciliation, and collaboration.



Field Trip Overview by Centre

ASA Edmonton Centre

Walk along the river valley and in downtown Edmonton to explore where archaeological excavations took place and then learn about historic residential and commercial buildings.

ASA Red Deer Centre

Spend the day exploring Dry Island Buffalo Jump Provincial Park, as the area is rich in archaeological and palaeontological materials.

ASA Bodo Centre

Tour geologic sites formed during the last ice age, and the the ‘nose’ of the bison that forms the western extent of the Neutral Hills.

ASA Calgary Centre

Drive between Calgary and Cochrane to experience both archaeological and historical sites, including Big Hill Springs Provincial Park and the Cochrane Ranch Park.

ASA Lethbridge Centre

Take a short hike to see the Sundial Medicine Wheel, and then spend the rest of the time learning about an iconic ghost town, Retlaw.

ASA Southeastern Centre

Visit the Ross Glen site, considered one of the most important stone circle sites in all of Alberta.

ASA Calgary Centre Self-Guided Driving Tour of Archaeological and Historic Sites Between Calgary and Cochrane

The Calgary Centre invites you to participate in a self-guided driving tour of archaeological and historical sites between Calgary and Cochrane. The tour begins on the northwestern city limits, where Crowchild Trail turns into Highway 1A between the communities of Tuscany and Rocky Ridge. Total driving time is estimated at 50 minutes.

Point of Interest: Everblue Springs Site

Location: Junction of Highway 1A and 12 Mile Coulee Road, southeast side of road

Immediately to the southeast of the intersection of Highway 1A and 12 Mile Coulee Road is the Everblue Springs Site (EgPn-700). The site was discovered in 2005 during the development for the community of Tuscany. The site can be found in the open area next to a recently constructed condo complex adjacent to the Everblue Nursery. A bone bed uncovered 110-140 cm below the surface provided evidence of a bison kill approximately 7500 years ago. Located on the margin of a spring, it is believed the bison were ambushed by hunters at the edge of the watering hole. The large projectile points recovered from this site represent a unique assemblage that are now referred to as *Burmis Barbed Points*. These projectile points represent a technology transition stage between early spear points associated with Paleo-Indian hunters and smaller atlatl points which dominated the Middle Prehistoric. For further information on the Everblue Springs Site and the archaeological interpretations of these finds please see:

Brian Vivian, Amanda Dow, Janet Blakey, Jason Roe (2011) The Everblue Springs Site and Early Transitional Bison Kill Sites of the Alberta Foothills 7,200 Years Ago. *Archaeological Society Occasional Paper No 11*.



Sample of Projectile Points Recovered from the Everblue Springs Site

Point of Interest: Old Morley Trail

Location: Head west on Highway 1A and travel along the Old Morley Trail

The modern highway closely follows the original trajectory of a historic wagon track between Fort Calgary and the settlement of Morley. This historic path followed a well established travel route used by First Nations who travelled up and down the Bow Valley for generations. The commanding views of the surrounding foothills landscape from the uplands along the valley edges were important locations for monitoring movement of bison herds. As you drive towards the mountains, notice there are portions of the highway that align with *Devils Head Peak*. This mountain is discernable by the prominent square peak which appears to rise above the surrounding mountains. The peak can be used as a sighting landmark from as far north as Olds and as far east as Strathmore. The Blackfoot name for this peak translates as '*Swan's Bill*'; so named because the black peak and snow covered ridges resemble the black tip of a Trumpeter Swan's bill turned toward the sky. This mountain was commonly referenced in 19th century exploration accounts written by James Hector and George Dawson, during which the name was changed to Devil's Head Peak.

Point of Interest: Lochend Road

Location: Approximately 6 km past Calgary's city limits, turn north on to Secondary Highway 766 or Lochend Road.

Driving north on Lochend Road, the hummocky and pot-holed terrain that characterizes much of the Bearspaw district transitions to a flatter, more even surface. This road closely represents the western extent of the Laurentide Ice Sheet during the most recent ice age. This single ice sheet originated over Hudson Bay and spread west to cover much of Western Canada. Smaller ice sheets, formed in the Rocky Mountains, coalesced to form the Cordilleran Ice Sheet which covered much of British Columbia and the rest of Alberta. Geoscientists can distinguish the extent of the sheets and amount of ground covered by examining the rocks found. Granites and feldspars are associated with the Laurentide Ice Sheet to the east, while the Cordilleran Ice Sheet from the west is associated with quartzites.

Point of Interest: Big Hill Springs Coulee

Location: Drive approximately 15 km on Highway 766 to junction with Highway 567 (Big Hill Springs Road). Turn west onto Highway 567 for 2.5 km as the road passes through Big Hill Springs Coulee.

Big Hill Springs Coulee is a glacial spillway formed by large volumes of water flowing across the landscape as glaciers started to recede and melt approximately 14,000 years ago. Big Hill Springs Coulee is one of many coulees found across southern Alberta. Other notable coulees include Manyberries Coulee by Cypress Hills, Tongue Creek, Knee Hill Creek, Chin Coulee and Verdigris Coulee near Milk River. Many of these spillways trend in a southeast direction, indicating the general elevation of the land and direction of meltwater travels away from the glaciers.

Point of Interest: Big Hill Springs Buffalo Jump

Location: From the west side of Big Springs Coulee follow signs for Big Hill Springs Park. Turn south onto Range Road 34A, approximately 3.5 past junction of Highway 766 and Highway 567. Follow this road for 2 km until parking lot at Big Hill Springs Provincial Park.

Note: Big Hills Springs Provincial Park is closed until June 2021, but you can park in the parking lot.

From the parking lot, look towards the west side of the valley for the location of the Big Hill Springs Buffalo Jump. Alberta is home to many bison jumps, including the Old Woman's bison jump, Bone Yard Coulee, Dry Island bison jump, Jumpingpound Creek, Tongue Creek, and Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Bison jumps represent a hunting strategy used by First Nations people for thousands of years. Hundreds of bison were driven over a topographic drop or cliff sufficient enough to kill or incapacitate the animals, sometimes from kilometres away. The butchering and processing of the bison provided First Nations people with resources for food, shelter, and clothing. The communal organization required for a mass bison kill event differs greatly from the ambush hunting strategy described at the Everblue Springs Site.

Point of Interest: Big Hill Springs Creamery

Location: From the parking lot at Big Hill Springs Provincial Park, follow the walking path towards the picnic area by the hillside

The remaining foundations of one of the first commercial creameries in Alberta is found along the margins of the stream that flows past the picnic grounds. According to historic records, D.M. Ratcliffe built the creamery in the 1890s and it is said to be one of the first in the province to produce butter for sale. The cold, clear spring water served as a refrigerant for the cream. The business changed ownership when Ratcliffe moved to the Red Deer area, but the creamery operated until the 1930s.



Archival Photo of Big Hill Springs Creamery
(Glenbow Archives NA-237-28)

Point of Interest: Cochrane Ranch

Location: From Highway 576 head west and travel for approximately 6.5 km until junction with Highway 22. Turn south onto Highway 22 towards Cochrane for 8.5 km. At the intersection of Highway 22 and Highway 1A in Cochrane, turn east then turn immediately into Cochrane Ranch Park on the north side of the road.

The historic Cochrane Ranch Park is the place of the first large-scale cattle operation in Alberta. Established in 1881, the ranch was contracted to supply beef for nearby NWMP posts, First Nations communities forcibly removed from their traditional bison hunting grounds, and construction crews working on the Canadian Pacific Rail line. The original grazing lease for the ranch extended across the region from Morley to Calgary, and south to the Elbow River and the Tsuut'ina Reserve. Investors from Montreal under the leadership of Senator Mathew Cochrane, for whom the ranch and town were named, established the Cochrane Ranch Company, and hired Colonel James Walker as the ranch manger. The ranch remained in operation until 1888, when the completion of the railway and extensive land base of the ranch led to the leased lands and cattle being sold off. In 1898 and 1919, two brick yards were established on the grounds of the ranch. In the 1970s it was decided to turn the ranch into a historic park, and an initial archaeological investigation was completed in 1977. More recent archaeological excavations were completed in 2019 and 2020. For a full account of the archaeological studies completed in 1977, see the reference below which is available online:

Roderick J. Heitzmann (1980) The Cochrane Ranche Site, *Archaeological Survey of Alberta Occasional Paper no. 16*, Alberta Culture Historic Resources Division

The stop at Cochrane Ranch completes the self-guided tour of archaeological and historic sites between Calgary and Cochrane, we hope you found your educational tour enjoyable. To head back to Calgary follow Highway 1A east for approximately 19 km. If you would like a sweet treat, we recommend stopping at McKay's Ice Cream Shop on Cochrane's Main Street for their wide assortment of ice cream.

Reference Map

Please see location directions in the self guided tour for more detailed instructions

