

ASA Distinguished Service Award

The Archaeological Society of Alberta (ASA) recognizes members that have made exceptional contributions to the society by awarding them the **Distinguished Service Award**. The ASA Awards Committee reviewed a nomination this spring and...



This year, the society is honoured to give this award, posthumously, to Dr. Terry Gibson who was an especially important member of the Bodo Archaeological Society. Some of you may have noticed Terry's legacy here, with the bench outside that recognizes his contributions to the Bodo Archaeological Sites, to the other little details scattered around that have Terry's influence and touch on them.

Terry earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1974 from Brandon University and then pursued a Masters and a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Alberta. Terry started his career at the Saskatchewan Research Council and later became one of the founding directors of Western Heritage, an archaeological research firm. While with Western, Terry managed the St. Albert office from 1999 to 2016. He was devoted to the pursuit of scientific methods in archaeological exploration and analysis, and he mentored many students and staff.

Terry was the first professional archaeologist to discover and name the Bodo Bison Skulls Archaeological Site. He saw great scientific and cultural potential in the development of the site for students and the public, and set up and directed the first archaeological field schools with the University of Alberta. Inspired by interest in the site from his students and the local community, Terry, along with local community members, worked to establish the Bodo Archaeological Society in 2003 which shortly after became a centre of the Archaeological Society of Alberta. Not only did he advance education of post-secondary students, but right from the beginning he was sure to include public components like open houses and school tours, making archaeology accessible to the public in East Central Alberta. He was active in trying out new methods at Bodo, such as ground penetrating radar and magnetometry. With his devoted interest in the site and mentoring of his former students who directed work there, many years of archaeological exploration and public engagement have continued. In his last year, Terry conducted geophysical

work at the site and lectured summer students on his latest research at the site. He was a board member of the Bodo Archaeological Society from the beginning and stayed on until his passing in August 2018. The successful programs at Bodo today are very much a legacy of Terry's vision and many of the students trained at Bodo under Terry still work in archaeology today.

In support letters provided by Krista Gilliland, Eric Damkjar and Brian Vivian common themes emerged. Terry was curious, passionate, a visionary and a forward-thinker, and he was always eager and willing to share his knowledge with others – something many of those around him benefitted from.

In Eric's letter he says: "Terry had great personal qualities – hard work, intelligence, vision, entrepreneurial instincts, collegiality, and love of a good time, all grounded in a rural upbringing. Terry could have successfully channelled his talents into so many possible pursuits. It is our collective good fortune that he chose archaeology as the beneficiary of his life-long love for and promotion of archaeology in Alberta and across Canada."

And for those of you who have spent a decent amount of time in Bodo, we can thank Terry not only for his archaeological legacy but also for the tradition of enjoying margaritas with friends and colleagues, often around the fire.

It is my honour to present the Archaeological Society of Alberta Distinguished Service Award to Terry Gibson. Accepting on Terry's behalf is his wife, Jane, (and son Patrick) who we are so glad to have here with us tonight.