

Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site of Canada Invisible History- A Public Archaeology Program

Looking for an exciting and interesting way to make a difference in conserving the history and stories of the fur trade era in western Canada? Would you like to volunteer alongside an expert archaeologist and learn through hands on experience about archaeological field and lab techniques? The Invisible History Public Archaeology Program provides a unique opportunity for archaeology enthusiasts to join a professionally supervised dig at Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site of Canada. Experience the hard work and thrills of discovery while assisting with a professional archaeological project that is part of historic preservation initiatives.

The 2011 season will focus on field study at the Hudson's Bay Company Fort which was occupied by fur traders, clerks, voyagers, tradesmen, and First Nations between 1835 and 1861. Each program is for four full, sequential days. During each session, a volunteer crew of up to 10 participants will excavate a portion of the third trading post property at Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site, learn about archaeological field and lab methods and techniques, and attend presentations addressing current historical research at the site. This is a hands-on practical experience which offers participants the opportunity to develop new skills and a sense of achievement, but more importantly, a contribution and investment of their time to recover and protect information about the past. Although the crew will spend much of their time with trowels in hand, there will be ample opportunity for experiencing the sights and sounds of the Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site Visitor Centre, interpretive program, and the innovation Métis Culture program.

Archaeology at Parks Canada

Human history in Canada spans 11000 years. It is reflected through different types of evidence including physical remains (archaeological resources) that have been left behind by individuals or groups of people. These archaeological resources can be found lying on top of the ground, buried in the earth, or submerged in water. Through archaeological investigations, research and analysis, archaeologists work somewhat like detectives to uncover clues that allow them to understand the people who once inhabited the land. The archaeologists' research and interpretations contribute to the understanding of Canadian history and of history in general.

Parks Canada archaeologists are involved in a number of projects. Among other things, they have to deal with social, technological, and climate changes that require a continual adaptation. In July 2010 Parks Canada archaeologists made a major discovery when they found the HMS Investigator, a British naval ship that was stranded in the Northwest Passage 155 years ago. The wreck was located at the bottom of Mercy Bay, just off Banks Island in the Northwest Territories. The site of the wreck is in Aulavik National Park.

What's below the surface at Rocky Mountain House?

Archaeological research has a long and rich life at Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site. The first dig happened in 1937. Archaeologists continue to monitor and preserve our cultural treasures. Today new tools and methods help them piece together the puzzles of the past. Fur trade posts were forts. "House" was the common name given to these posts. The last fur trade post at Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site is special to us. It was the first archaeological site within Alberta. Archaeologists across the country call it "Site 1R", and Parks Canada archaeologists have unearthed thousands of artefacts on site. Our visitor centre displays a selection of metal artefacts such as nails and projectiles, bone artefacts, knives and weapons for you to examine. Archaeologists revisit our site often and check the state of our cultural treasures. They also start new searches to solve more mysteries.

Project:	Invisible History, A Public Archaeology Program
Sponsor:	Confluence Heritage Society and Parks Canada
Project Director:	Dr. Peter Francis (University of Calgary)
Location:	Rocky Mountain House, Alberta, Canada

Session Dates	August 16, 2011-August 19, 2011 August 22, 2011-August 25, 2011
Minimum Length	4 days
Registration Deadline	August 15, 2011
Project Size	Max. 10 participants per session
Minimum Age	Fifteen
Experience	None
Cost	\$250.00 per person per session

Cost includes program fees (training, equipment, morning presentations, and supervision). Lunches will be provided, along with one supper. Cost does not include accommodation or other meals.

Registration Requirements:

- Participants should be in good physical condition to participate in excavation. The pace of excavation will be comfortable, yet challenging. An archaeological project such as this involves more than just digging though. Field tasks can accommodate all participants though, as there will be opportunity to participate in a variety of activities such as photography, mapping and working with artefacts in the field lab.
- Experience is not required.
- Participants must be 15 years or older.

Registration Form:

(Please print this registration form or contact us to receive a copy via mail/fax)

Select Program Date:

August 16– August 19

August 22– August 25

Participant Name: Mr / Mrs / Ms _____

Home Address: _____

Street Address _____

City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____

Phone: () _____ (Day)

Phone: () _____ (Evening)

E-mail: _____

Please note special dietary requirements: _____

Personal Details and Interests (optional) _____

Program Costs:

Archaeology Program: **CAN \$250.00** (tax included)

Payment:

Number of participants ____ x 250.00 = _____

Total Payment: _____

Full payment required at time of registration.

Registration Deadline is **August 15, 2011**

Payment Options:

By Mail: Send completed registration form with cheque or credit card payment to:

Confluence Heritage Society

Box 2141

Rocky Mountain House, AB

T4B 1B6

By Fax: Send completed registration form with credit card information to
403-845-5320

By Phone: Call the Confluence Heritage Society at 403-845-6680 (with credit
card information)

Cheque (make payable to **Confluence Heritage Society**)

Visa

MasterCard

Card # _____

Name on Card _____

Expiry Date ____ / ____

Signature _____

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
9 am	Arrive at RMHNHS Visitor Centre/ Registration	Arrive at RMHNHS Visitor Centre	Arrive at RMHNHS Visitor Centre	Arrive at RMHNHS Visitor Centre
9:15 – 10 am	Introductions and orientation	Presentation	Presentation	Presentation
10 – 11 am	Tour of the site	Excavation	Excavation	Excavation
11 am - 12 pm	Presentation			
12 – 1 pm	Lunch -Period lunch at camp kitchen	Lunch -Box lunch provided by the Confluence Heritage Society	Lunch -Box lunch provided by the Confluence Heritage Society -Meet/greet with elders	Lunch -Box lunch provided by the Confluence Heritage Society
1 – 2:30 pm	Presentation	Excavation	Excavation	Excavation
2:30 – 4:30 pm	Excavation set-up			Conclude program
5:30 - 8:00 pm			Evening event with Métis cuisine, traditions and music	

Cancellation Policy:

Refund will be granted if cancellation is received in writing prior to **August 15, 2011** (minus a 10% handling fee).

We reserve the right to withdraw the 2011 Archaeology Program sessions or make changes to the program sessions as required, without penalty. **Please inquire about the status of the program sessions before making travel arrangements.**

Registration Policy:

Each session is limited to 10 participants. If the sessions have been filled, we will immediately contact any further registrants about the space limitations. All spaces will be granted on a "first registered & paid, first serve" basis.

We recommend that participants obtain travel insurance.

Weather and Attire:

Weather conditions in August are generally favourable (dry and warm) but there will be rainy and cool days, so participants should bring appropriate clothes for these conditions.

We recommend wearing clothing in layers and each participant should bring a brimmed hat, sunglasses, rain gear and two pairs of comfortable shoes.

Additionally, be sure to have a supply of both insect repellent and sunscreen.

Accommodations:

Participants are responsible for ensuring their own accommodations. The Town of Rocky Mountain House has a number of pleasant places to stay. Check out <http://www.rockymtnhouse.com/visiting-accomm.htm> for details.

Questions?

Please contact us through email:

Confluence Heritage Society: staff@confluencehs.org or rocky.friends@pc.gc.ca

Parks Canada: rocky.info@pc.gc.ca

Or telephone:

Confluence Heritage Society 1-403-845-6680

Parks Canada 1-403-845-2412