

**The proposal went well beyond student training in several respects**

From P. 12

Archaeologists (in Alberta), the University of Lethbridge, and Augustana, and we either have or will be advising them of this news. This will not alter our plans to work with these organizations or institutions.

PN: What's your reaction?

J.I. I felt the proposal went well beyond student training in several respects. Moreover, the Bodo Archaeological Society and its relationship with municipal governments, economic development offices, and regional organizations reflect an evolving community capacity that simply did not exist a few years ago. The reuse of perfectly acceptable, but unused local facilities, along with other forms of community support (I am thinking particularly of the tour bus) without the investment of substantial sums in infrastructure are effective alternatives. The regional quality of life implications, and the efforts we are making toward Aboriginal involvement are all valuable measures. It is unfortunate that RADF could not support the proposal, but we continue to feel it has considerable merit. We will eventually find ways to achieve the kinds of objectives that the University of Alberta and the dozen regional organizations, governments, and other institutions had endorsed in our proposal.

PN: What implications might this have generally for the Bodo dig site and for the field school?

J.I. It is important to understand the links between the field school, interpretation arising from the archaeological research, and Bodo's status as a regional tourism attraction. Outside of the leading universities in the world, archaeological field schools almost always go through a cycle of roughly five years' dura-

tion in which a research prospect is developed and fieldwork goes on for several seasons. Everyone can see the intriguing nature of the fieldwork, but that is the tip of the archaeological "iceberg," one might say. For every year spent in the field, months of analysis and reporting are required to meet provincial regulatory requirements, and to conduct sound scientific research (that for one thing, yields accurate and interesting interpretive materials). By about year five, the researcher responsible for the research typically faces monumental analysis and reporting obligations. Unfortunately, it is commonplace for that given field school focus to end. Some time later, the cycle may begin again. Left to their own devices, universities must make decisions about these scenarios suitable to their own circumstances. Even a leading institution in the world—like the University of Michigan—might offer a field school in alternate years. That allows annual enrollments to build, and gives researchers a better chance to keep up with scientific analysis and reporting.

The situation at Bodo is, in my experience, unique. The initial work and early field school efforts created not simply tremendous local interest, but an unprecedented level of community support and commitment. The

ongoing field school very quickly became important in efforts to revitalize cultural tourism in the larger region. In western Canada, as elsewhere, the typical model for interpreting a highly significant archaeological site has been to stage a multimillion dollar development to manage the interpretive process.

That was not possible in the case of Bodo, and instead, through collaboration between the community and the University of Alberta, a series of different interpretive measures came into play. Instead of investing millions of dollars in infrastructure, the Bodo School was (and still is being) re-cast to assume a new role as an interpretive, lab and classroom facility. The Bodo Archaeological Society conducted public school and other tours directly to the site, especially while excavations were underway. Based on real archaeological findings, effective interpretive videos with high production values were developed.

The University of Alberta is sensitive to these regional and community aspirations. If our collective Bodo activities were simply about training students, then it would be quite straightforward to make a dispassionate decision regarding the current situation, and perhaps to cease offering the field school for a period of time while we dealt with reporting

backlogs. We know, however, that taking that step will harm visitation connected with Bodo. In fact, in my former role as Provincial Archaeologist, I know that the end of archaeological field activities diminishes the interpretive success of an even major facility like Head-Smashed-in, and will bring about the operational end of a more modest facility (such as the Strathcona Archaeological Site).

Our RADF proposal was about breaking out of that cycle, and putting our annual field school activities on a stable long term footing, so that the attraction we all agree is central to the Bodo experience, the ability to visit an ongoing dig, is routinely there (and in fact, expanded). I should also say that the decision to hold the field school does not rest with the University of Alberta alone: any archaeological project must receive a permit. The regulatory agency, the Archaeological Survey of Alberta, must be satisfied that we are dealing with our reporting and research commitments adequately.

The university is keenly aware of the importance of ongoing archaeological field activities to interpretive programs at Bodo; at this time, we need to make a careful consideration of how to go about meeting the legitimate needs of the community, the regulator, and our institution in a responsible way. We are optimistic we'll find an appropriate solution.

PN: Any word if the U of A has a change of plans?

J.I. I want to stress that the U of A has not changed its plans. We remain strongly committed to the IPA and to finding a way to achieve a sustainable long term presence in your region that will allow us to continue to be a positive force in promoting regional visitation and in enhancing quality of life.

PN: Will some sort of re-application take place and are you optimistic about that?

J.I. The university will have to evaluate the idea of a re-application, and we would particularly want to make that re-evaluation in conjunction with key partners such as the Bodo Archaeological Society. For those reasons, it is too early for me to comment on this idea.

PN: Can the local community help to advance the institute?

J.I. In my first full year working closely with people and organizations in the Provost and Bodo districts (and certainly before that), I have constantly been impressed by the cutting edge thinking and proactive measures I see on every visit. The local community has already helped a great deal in forwarding objectives important to the Institute of Prairie Archaeology's mandate, and we want to acknowledge that.

Both field project director Elizabeth Mann and I have appreciated the expressions of continued support from individuals and organizations familiar with what we think really is a win-

ning project. We have already had some preliminary discussions with the Bodo Archaeological Society on measures that may assist us, and plan to continue these discussions concerning some concrete steps that will help us this year.

PN: Can you forward text (or portion) from the group that denied the application to help shed light on it?

J.I. The RADF decision was communicated by program director Judy Ferguson in a brief letter. The letter said "... it has been determined not to proceed with your project to the application stage at this time," continuing "... it was determined that, as the primary activities appear to be student field research, the project is limited in its innovation and does not sufficiently address any of the four RADF rural development pillars." Any questions regarding evaluation of our expression of interest would need to be directed to RADF administrators or board members.

PN: Anything else that you can tell us about this development would be appreciated to pass on to our readers including what future steps might be taken.

J.I. Just to say that we are grateful for the expressions of continued support we have received in recent days, and that we will continue working hard to find solutions that allow us all to move forward with a most worthwhile project.

**DARRYL R. ACKROYD Q.C.**

Barrister & Solicitor of the law firm of  
**ACKROYD LLP**

*Darryl will be in attendance at his  
Provost Office  
in the Gregory Block, Main Street, Provost.*

**Thursday, October 9**

10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

**Friday, October 10**

7:00 a.m. - 12 noon

**CALL 753-2231 FOR APPOINTMENTS.**

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