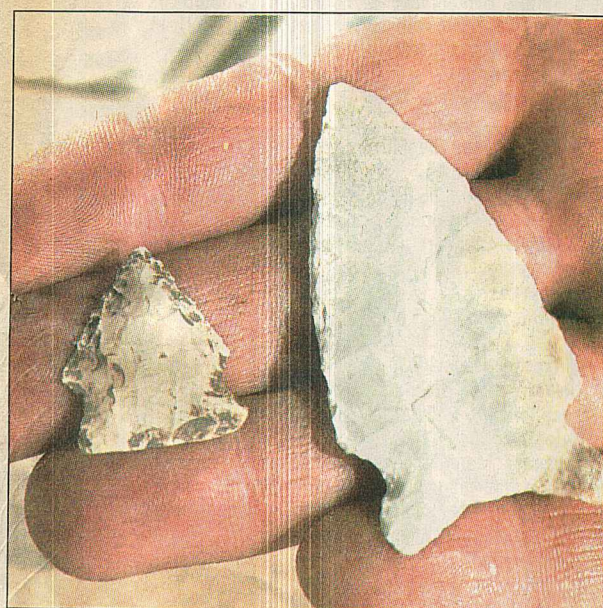


TREASURE HUNT



THE HUNTED: Spearheads from Cochrane

By Gordon Jaremko

Calgary Herald
Buried treasures keep turning up all over Alberta.

Oil, gas, pipeline, dam, road, real estate and electricity projects in the province start chain reactions that put to work a small army of treasure hunters like Tom Head, partner Stan Van Dyke and their Bison Historical Services Ltd.

Bison is in its 10th year of proving a living can be made in archeology. The jobs surprise and delight the experts by paying them to do a labor of love as outdoor detectives.

Credit a legacy from the first wave of environmentalism in the 1960s, when the now 49-year-old Van Dyke trained amid its roots at San Francisco State University and Head, now 50, earned his credentials at the University of Calgary.

In 1973, conservationists persuaded the province to pass the Alberta Historical Resources Preservation Act. Ever since, major projects — or small ones near sensitive spots like parks — have had to include "impact assessments," at the expense of the developers.

The requirement spells long walks with shovels for the experts at spotting the remains of bygone civilizations, then jobs for crews of up to 20 specialists in unearthing, preserving and recording the artifacts.

In the boom times of the late 1970s and early '80s, archeologists mounted up to 220 Alberta expeditions a year. Even in the slumps of the late '80s and early '90s, there were about 100 hunts annually.

Reviving industries have raised the number back into the 150 range for the past two years.

And there are always surprises, even on familiar terrain.

NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd. and Bison Historical showed how taking a fresh look at old stomping grounds can pay off this spring.

NOVA sent Head out for a new march down an old pipeline right-of-way, about 60 kilometres northwest of downtown Calgary. Rising gas deliveries required installation of a third pipeline within the corridor.

He found archeological gold only about 20 kilometres north of Cochrane, and three kilometres west of a rural school beside busy Highway 22.

Tucked into a wooded and sheltered slope, the place looked like a natural for camping and catching buffalo, deer, elk and small game. He started digging.

The spot turned out to be one of the biggest archeological discoveries in recent Alberta history. A six-week excavation by crews of up to 11 experts, finished in mid-June, only scratched the surface by probing 10 per cent of the site.

The exact location remains secret to save it for more digs and prevent looting or trespassing. It has become sacred ground too, christened Hunter Valley and blessed by the Stoney and



THE HUNTERS: Tom Head, left, Stan Van Dyke examine artifacts from aboriginal campsite north of Cochrane

David Lazarowich, Calgary Herald

Archeologists' business is a labor of love digging up Alberta history

Tsuu T'ina Indians.

Conclusions about the spot are still months of interpretation and report writing away, starting with carbon-dating that will measure trace radioactivity to date the artifacts within about 90 years.

But the site already stands out as likely the oldest pottery find in Alberta. It is also a motherlode of stone weapons and tools dating back 1,600 years or more.

Head and Van Dyke say the items have no significant dollar value, although they belong to a class that spells big money in the United States as "pre-Columbian" or older than the European discovery of America.

In Alberta the hunt centres on knowledge, not collectors' prizes. This is no path to riches. A consulting archeologist, with a master's degree plus a licence to run digs, can expect to earn \$30,000 to \$45,000 a year.

The field has other compensations, say the professionals.

Hunting for buried treasure runs in the family for Head. He is an Oklahoma-born son of a geologist who brought the family to Alberta at the dawn of its oil industry in the 1950s.

"I wanted to play around. I don't want to sound too flippant. But I tell everybody I don't have a real job. This one is fun. You're out of doors four to six months a year. It's what I wanted to do."

Van Dyke left a PhD course to be a field man when Alberta created the livelihood with its preservation law. He prefers doing the work to teaching at a university. "We're putting together a puzzle."

He says a new picture is emerging from digs like Hunter Valley, plus other big sites such as the Oldman River Dam and a road intersection near Fort Macleod.

The buried record suggests prehistoric Alberta, like the modern edition, was a resource, business and trading capital.

"It goes way beyond the old descriptions of the native in the pre-Columbian past. There is evidence for large societal entities and a kind of industry. These were not just scattered nomads."

Up to 3,000 plains dwellers gathered for giant hunts, preserved meat as pemmican and traded it across northwestern America for tools or materials to make them such as fine stone, wood and sea shells.

As the picture emerges, archeological treasure-hunting lures new recruits who count its long apprenticeships and modest incomes as fair prices to pay for shares in the fascination of resurrecting forgotten civilizations.

Bison staffer Wendy Unfreed, a dig leader yet still a newcomer with about six years on the job, says: "The treasure is not in the goodies you find, but in piecing together the story. You pull together this grand story of how people lived."

Bottom Lines

Camp to train business owners

By Anne Crawford

Calgary Herald

If you're among the "downsized" legions and think being your own boss is the cure, **Entrepreneur Boot Camp** may be the prescription for you.

Scott Farnham is a local entrepreneur with the bright idea of a boot camp. With several successful enterprises behind him, Farnham believes in hands-on experience.

"I've never learned something simply from hearing some guy tell me about it once. I have to actually go out and do it for myself. That way I learn from first-hand experience. And experience has shown me that that's the case for most people."

Farnham has lined up four proven entrepreneurs and five professional advisers on law, accounting, banking, marketing and financing for a 100-hour, 10-day camp that he says "will give you the tools to achieve your goal of successful self-employment."

The first camp runs Aug. 7-18 and the second Aug. 21-Sept. 1. There's room for 16 aspirants in each camp. Call Farnham at 286-5549.

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The **Calgary Chamber of Commerce** is looking for sponsors for **Small Business Week**, Oct. 2-6.

There are four levels to choose from, and room for even the smallest of businesses. At level four you can sponsor a door prize, for instance, says **Anne Collins**, member of the independent business committee in charge of sponsorships for the week.

Level one costs you \$7,000 and gives you week-long recognition; at level two, \$2,500 buys you sponsorship of one of four special events; and for \$500 at level three, you can be a secondary sponsor of one event. Call Collins at 294-4935.

□ □ □
Even if you only see the occasional resume, you're bound to have come across some mind-boggling bloopers — the kind that guarantee the applicant gets the door.

Canadian Banker magazine's summer issue features some choice ones collected by **Robert Half**, founder of **Accountemps**, a temporary-personnel agency:

- "Thank you for your consideration. Hope to hear from you shortly." (*Hey, don't get personal.*)
- "Education: College, August 1880-May 1994." (*A slow learner?*)
- "Work experience: Dealing with customers' conflicts that arouse."
- "My intensity and focus are at inordinately high levels, and my ability to complete projects on time is unspeakable."
- "Here are my qualifications for you to overlook." (*If you insist.*)

If you have any items or pieces of information you'd like to pass along, call me at 235-7474 or send a fax to 235-7358.

Trucking firm built one load at a time

By Ron DeRuyter

Kitchener-Waterloo Record

KITCHENER, Ont. — Bob Hall used to supervise the loading of every truck that left J.&R. Hall Transport's warehouse.

But the Ayr, Ont., trucking company has grown rapidly — revenue has increased more than 1,000 per cent in the last five years — so that kind of personal attention to every aspect of the business from the company president isn't possible anymore.

"During the past year, they have kind of kicked me out of there," says Hall.

His desire to make sure every truck is loaded properly is part and parcel of the company's commitment to top-quality service.

"That is the backbone of our business," he says. "There are many companies who move a load from Point A to Point B for a lot less than we do, but we don't think anyone provides the service we do at the rates we charge."

Its commitment to service — it promises minimal losses to damage and delivery on time — has fuelled the company's growth.

"There are a lot of customers out there looking for good service," says Hall. "I could double the company in

two months if I chose to."

With revenue zooming from almost \$600,000 in 1987 to \$7.1 million last year, the 50-employee company ranked 61st on Profit magazine's current list of Canada's fastest-growing companies. But unbridled growth is not what the company is aiming for.

"Because of what we do, we have to have a hands-on operation here," says Hall. "We cannot afford to get too big or we will lose what we've got. If our service slips, we are done."

The company counts on its front-line staff, primarily its 30 drivers, to deliver top-notch service. As the company gets larger, it's more likely there will be a breakdown in communications — constant communication is essential in the trucking business — and that not all employees will share its commitment to customer service.

"It is very difficult to get staff who recognize the importance of what it is we are doing," says Hall. "The big thing we are constantly telling our people is: The customer is always right. He may be unreasonable or impossible, but he is still the customer."

Hanging on to service-oriented employees is so important, the company recently decided to stop hauling freight to New York City. The decision, made



FAMILY BUSINESS: Bob and Donna Hall, with children, in front of rig

after a driver refused to take a load there because he was concerned about his safety, will result in lost business, but the company decided its drivers are more important.

"It is very hard to find good drivers," notes Hall.

Growth also increases the company's exposure to risk. "When you see some of the lawsuits going on today, you can be on top of the world today and gone tomorrow," says Hall. "That is something we live with every day."

If rapid growth presents problems,

so does staying small.

J.&R. is a less-than-truckload (LTL) carrier. It does not haul full loads for customers. If the company is too small, it won't have the customer base to be able to assemble loads that pay.

"We thought we had that problem three years ago," says Hall. "In order to take on Xerox Canada as a customer, we had to commit to putting trucks out every day. At the time, we weren't too sure we could fill them. As it turned out, as soon as we offered daily service, there was no question whether we had the work. The work was there."

The customer-is-always-right philosophy also can present problems for a small company.

The company's customers — in any given month, it is shipping for 200 customers — call Hall or one of his sons when they have a complaint or concern. But ease of access creates dilemmas — customers expect immediate responses to problems, before the company has a chance to get the driver's side of the story.

So what's the right size? Hall, who occasionally drives to help in a pinch and "see the drivers' side of the world," believes there is an optimum size. "But I haven't found out what it is yet."